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THE WORKS OF

Sir Walter Scott

INCLUDING

THE WAVERLEY NOVELS

AND THE POEMS

IN FIFTY VOLUMES

VOLUME XXVI

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'Are you mad?' said Lord Dalgarno

THE FORTUNES OF NIGEL

BY

SIR WALTER SCOTT

VOLUME II

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NOTES ON THE ILLUSTRATIONS

'ARE YOU MAD?' SAID LORD DALGARNO *Frontispiece*

From a drawing by Mr. Balliol Salmon. (See Vol. I, page 270.)

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From a drawing by J. T. Smith, 1789, in the British Museum. Showing the locality of David Ramsay's shop and the quaint architecture of London in the time of the novel.

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From a drawing in the British Museum, 1767. A favourite royal palace as early as 1300, it passed into the hands of the nobility and came back to the crown in 1433, on the death of Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester. It was the birthplace of Henry VIII, Mary, and Elizabeth. The site is now occupied by the Greenwich Hospital and the Royal Naval College. Adjoining the palace is an extensive park of one hundred and ninety acres, still the feeding-ground of herds of deer.

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From a water colour by G. Shephard, 1810, in the British Museum.

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THE FORTUNES OF NIGEL

VOLUME II

THE FORTUNES OF NIGEL

CHAPTER XVIII

Mother. What! dazzled by a flash of Cupid's mirror,
With which the boy, as mortal urchins wont,
Flings back the sunbeam in the eye of passengers,
Then laughs to see them stumble!
Daughter. Mother, no;
It was a lightning-flash which dazzled me,
And never shall these eyes see true again.
Beef and Pudding, an old English Comedy.

It is necessary that we should leave our hero Nigel for a time, although in a situation neither safe, comfortable, nor creditable, in order to detail some particulars which have immediate connexion with his fortunes.

It was but the third day after he had been forced to take refuge in the house of old Trapbois, the noted usurer of Whitefriars, commonly called Golden Trapbois, when the pretty daughter of old Ramsay, the watchmaker, after having piously seen her father finish his breakfast (from the fear that he might, in an abstruse fit of thought, swallow the salt-cellar instead of a crust of the brown loaf), set forth from the house as soon as he was again plunged into the depth of calculation, and, accompanied only by that faithful old drudge, Janet, the Scots laundress, to whom her whims were laws, made her way to Lombard Street, and disturbed, at the unusual hour of eight in the morning, Aunt Judith, the sister of her worthy godfather.

The venerable maiden received her young visitor with no great complacency; for, naturally enough, she had neither the same admiration of her very pretty countenance nor allowance for her foolish and girlish impatience of temper which Master George Heriot entertained. Still, Mistress Margaret was a favourite of her brother's, whose will was to Aunt Judith a supreme law; and she contented herself with asking her untimely visitor, 'What she made so early with her pale, chitty face in the streets of London?'

'I would speak with the Lady Hermione,' answered the almost breathless girl, while the blood ran so fast to her face as totally to remove the objection of paleness which Aunt Judith had made to her complexion.

'With the Lady Hermione!' said Aunt Judith — 'with the Lady Hermione! and at this time in the morning, when she will scarce see any of the family, even at seasonable hours? You are crazy, you silly wench, or you abuse the indulgence which my brother and the lady have shown to you.'

'Indeed — indeed I have not,' repeated Margaret, struggling to retain the unbidden tear which seemed ready to burst out on the slightest occasion. 'Do but say to the lady that your brother's god-daughter desires earnestly to speak to her, and I know she will not refuse to see me.'

Aunt Judith bent an earnest, suspicious, and inquisitive glance on her young visitor. 'You might make me your secretary, my lassie,' she said, 'as well as the Lady Hermione. I am older, and better skilled to advise. I live more in the world than one who shuts herself up within four rooms, and I have the better means to assist you.'

'O! no — no — no,' said Margaret, eagerly, and with more earnest sincerity than complaisance; 'there are some things to which you cannot advise me, Aunt Judith. It is a case — pardon me, my dear aunt — a case beyond your counsel.'

'I am glad on 't, maiden,' said Aunt Judith, somewhat angrily; 'for I think the follies of the young people of this generation would drive mad an old brain like mine. Here you come on the viretot, through the whole streets of London, to talk some nonsense to a lady who scarce sees God's sun but when he shines on a brick wall. But I will tell her you are here.'

She went away, and shortly returned with a dry — 'Mistress Marget, the lady will be glad to see you; and that 's more, my young madam, than you had a right to count upon.'

Mistress Margaret hung her head in silence, too much perplexed by the train of her own embarrassed thoughts for attempting either to conciliate Aunt Judith's kindness, or, which on other occasions would have been as congenial to her own humour, to retaliate on her cross-tempered remarks and manner. She followed Aunt Judith, therefore, in silence and dejection, to the strong oaken door which divided the Lady Hermione's apartments from the rest of George Heriot's spacious house.

At the door of this sanctuary it is necessary to pause, in order to correct the reports with which Richie Moniplies had filled his master's ear, respecting the singular appearance of that lady's attendance at prayers, whom we now own to be by name the Lady Hermione. Some part of these exaggerations had been communicated to the worthy Scotsman by Jenkin Vincent, who was well experienced in the species of wit which has been long a favourite in the city, under the names of cross-biting, giving the dor, bamboozling, cramming, hoaxing, humbugging, and quizzing; for which sport Richie Moniplies, with his solemn gravity, totally unapprehensive of a joke, and his natural propensity to the marvellous, formed an admirable subject. Farther ornaments the tale had received from Richie himself, whose tongue, especially when oiled with good liquor, had a considerable tendency to amplification, and who failed not, while he retailed to his master all the wonderful circumstances narrated by Vincent, to add to them many conjectures of his own, which his imagination had over-hastily converted into facts.

Yet the life which the Lady Hermione had led for two years, during which she had been the inmate of George Heriot's house, was so singular as almost to sanction many of the wild reports which went abroad. The house which the worthy goldsmith inhabited had in former times belonged to a powerful and wealthy baronial family, which, during the reign of Henry VIII, terminated in a dowager lady, very wealthy, very devout, and most unalienably attached to the Catholic faith. The chosen friend of the Honourable Lady Foljambe was the abbess of St. Roque's nunnery, like herself, a conscientious, rigid, and devout Papist. When the house of St. Roque was despotically dissolved by the fiat of the impetuous monarch, the Lady Foljambe received her friend into her spacious mansion, together with two vestal sisters, who, like their abbess, were determined to follow the tenor of their vows, instead of embracing the profane liberty which the monarch's will had thrown in their choice.

For their residence, the Lady Foljambe contrived, with all secrecy — for Henry might not have relished her interference — to set apart a suite of four rooms, with a little closet fitted up as an oratory, or chapel; the whole apartments fenced by a strong oaken door to exclude strangers, and accommodated with a turning-wheel to receive necessaries, according to the practice of all nunneries. In this retreat the abbess of St. Roque and her attendants passed many years, communicating only with the Lady Foljambe, who, in virtue of their prayers, and of the support she afforded them, accounted herself little less than a saint on earth. The abbess, fortunately for herself, died before her munificent patroness, who lived deep in Queen Elizabeth's time, ere she was summoned by fate.

The Lady Foljambe was succeeded in this mansion by a sour fanatic knight, a distant and collateral relation, who claimed the same merit for expelling the priestess of Baal which his predecessor had founded on maintaining the votaresses of Heaven. Of the two unhappy nuns, driven from their ancient refuge, one went beyond sea; the other, unable from old age to undertake such a journey, died under the roof of a faithful Catholic widow of low degree. Sir Paul Crambagge, having got rid of the nuns, spoiled the chapel of its ornaments, and had thoughts of altogether destroying the apartments, until checked by the reflection that the operation would be an unnecessary expense, since he only inhabited three rooms of the large mansion, and had not therefore the slightest occasion for any addition to its accommodations. His son proved a waster and a prodigal, and from him the house was bought by our friend George Heriot, who, finding, like Sir Paul, the house more than sufficiently ample for his accommodation, left the Foljambe apartments, or St. Roque's rooms, as they were called, in the state in which he found them.

About two years and a half before our history opened, when Heriot was absent upon an expedition to the Continent, he sent special orders to his sister and his cash-keeper, directing that the Foljambe apartments should be fitted up handsomely, though plainly, for the reception of a lady, who would make them her residence for some time, and who would live more or less with his own family according to her pleasure. He also directed that the necessary repairs should be made with secrecy, and that as little should be said as possible upon the subject of his letter.

When the time of his return came nigh, Aunt Judith and the household were on the tenter-hooks of impatience. Master George came, as he had intimated, accompanied by a lady, so eminently beautiful that, had it not been for her extreme and uniform paleness, she might have been reckoned one of the loveliest creatures on earth. She had with her an attendant, or humble companion, whose business seemed only to wait upon her. This person, a reserved woman, and by her dialect a foreigner, aged about fifty, was called by the lady Monna Paula, and by Master Heriot and others Mademoiselle Pauline. She slept in the same room with her patroness at night, ate in her apartment, and was scarcely ever separated from her during the day.

These females took possession of the nunnery of the devout abbess, and, without observing the same rigorous seclusion, according to the letter, seemed wellnigh to restore the apartments to the use to which they had been originally designed. The new inmates lived and took their meals apart from the rest of the family. With the domestics Lady Hermione, for so she was termed, held no communication, and Mademoiselle Pauline only such as was indispensable, which she despatched as briefly as possible. Frequent and liberal largesses reconciled the servants to this conduct; and they were in the habit of observing to each other, that to do a service for Mademoiselle Pauline was like finding a fairy treasure.

To Aunt Judith the Lady Hermione was kind and civil, but their intercourse was rare; on which account the elder lady felt some pangs both of curiosity and injured dignity. But she knew her brother so well, and loved him so dearly, that his will, once expressed, might be truly said to become her own. The worthy citizen was not without a spice of the dogmatism which grows on the best disposition when a word is a law to all around. Master George did not endure to be questioned by his family, and, when he had generally expressed his will that the Lady Hermione should live in the way most agreeable to her, and that no inquiries should be made concerning her history, or her motives for observing such strict seclusion, his sister well knew that he would have been seriously displeased with any attempt to pry into the secret.

But, though Heriot's servants were bribed, and his sister awed, into silent acquiescence in these arrangements, they were not of a nature to escape the critical observation of the neighbourhood. Some opined that the wealthy goldsmith was about to turn Papist, and reëstablish Lady Foljambe's nunnery, others that he was going mad, others that he was either going to marry or to do worse. Master George's constant appearance at church, and the knowledge that the supposed votaress always attended when the prayers of the English ritual were read in the family, liberated him from the first of these suspicions; those who had to transact business with him upon 'change could not doubt the soundness of Master Heriot's mind; and, to confute the other rumours, it was credibly reported by such as made the matter their particular interest that Master George Heriot never visited his guest but in presence of Mademoiselle Pauline, who sat with her work in a remote part of the same room in which they conversed. It was also ascertained that these visits scarcely ever exceeded an hour in length, and were usually only repeated once a week — an intercourse too brief and too long interrupted to render it probable that love was the bond of their union.

The inquirers were, therefore, at fault, and compelled to relinquish the pursuit of Master Heriot's secret, while a thousand ridiculous tales were circulated amongst the ignorant and superstitious, with some specimens of which our friend Richie Moniplies had been 'crammed,' as we have seen, by the malicious apprentice of worthy David Ramsay.

There was one person in the world who, it was thought, could, if she would, have said more of the Lady Hermione than any one in London, except George Heriot himself; and that was the said David Ramsay's only child, Margaret.

This girl was not much past the age of fifteen when the Lady Hermione first came to England, and was a very frequent visitor at her godfather's, who was much amused by her childish sallies, and by the wild and natural beauty with which she sung the airs of her native country. Spoilt she was on all hands — by the indulgence of her godfather, the absent habits and indifference of her father, and the deference of all around to her caprices, as a beauty and as an heiress. But though, from these circumstances, the city beauty had become as wilful, as capricious, and as affected as unlimited indulgence seldom fails to render those to whom it is extended; and although she exhibited upon many occasions that affectation of extreme shyness, silence, and reserve which misses in their teens are apt to take for an amiable modesty, and, upon others, a considerable portion of that flippancy which youth sometimes confounds with wit, Mistress Margaret had much real shrewdness and judgment, which wanted only opportunities of observation to refine it, a lively, good-humoured, playful disposition, and an excellent heart. Her acquired follies were much increased by reading plays and romances, to which she devoted a great deal of her time, and from which she adopted ideas as different as possible from those which she might have obtained from the invaluable and affectionate instructions of an excellent mother, and the freaks of which she was sometimes guilty rendered her not unjustly liable to the charge of affectation and coquetry. But the little lass had sense and shrewdness enough to keep her failings out of sight of her godfather, to whom she was sincerely attached; and so high she stood in his favour that, at his recommendation, she obtained permission to visit the recluse Lady Hermione.

The singular mode of life which that lady observed, her great beauty, rendered even more interesting by her extreme paleness, the conscious pride of being admitted farther than the rest of the world into the society of a person who was wrapped in so much mystery, made a deep impression on the mind of Margaret Ramsay; and though their conversations were at no time either long or confidential, yet, proud of the trust reposed in her, Margaret was as secret respecting their tenor as if every word repeated had been to cost her life. No inquiry, however artfully backed by flattery and insinuation, whether on the part of Dame Ursula or any other person equally inquisitive, could wring from the little maiden one word of what she heard or saw after she entered these mysterious and secluded apartments. The lightest question concerning Master Heriot's ghost was sufficient, at her gayest moment, to check the current of her communicative prattle and render her silent.

We mention this chiefly to illustrate the early strength of Margaret's character — a strength concealed under a hundred freakish whims and humours, as an ancient and massive buttress is disguised by its fantastic covering of ivy and wild-flowers. In truth, if the damsel had told all she heard or saw within the Foljambe apartments, she would have said but little to gratify the curiosity of inquirers.

At the earlier period of their acquaintance, the Lady Hermione was wont to reward the attentions of her little friend with small but elegant presents, and entertain her by a display of foreign rarities and curiosities, many of them of considerable value. Sometimes the time was passed in a way much less agreeable to Margaret, by her receiving lessons from Pauline in the use of the needle. But although her preceptress practised these arts with a dexterity then only known in foreign convents, the pupil proved so incorrigibly idle and awkward that the task of needlework was at length given up, and lessons of music substituted in their stead. Here also Pauline was excellently qualified as an instructress, and Margaret, more successful in a science for which nature had gifted her, made proficiency both in vocal and instrumental music. These lessons passed in presence of the Lady Hermione, to whom they seemed to give pleasure. She sometimes added her own voice to the performance in a pure, clear stream of liquid melody; but this was only when the music was of a devotional cast. As Margaret became older, her communications with the recluse assumed a different character. She was allowed, if not encouraged, to tell whatever she had remarked out of doors, and the Lady Hermione, while she remarked the quick, sharp, and retentive powers of observation possessed by her young friend, often found sufficient reason to caution her against rashness in forming opinions and giddy petulance in expressing them.

The habitual awe with which she regarded this singular personage induced Mistress Margaret, though by no means delighting in contradiction or reproof, to listen with patience to her admonitions, and to make full allowance for the good intentions of the patroness by whom they were bestowed; although in her heart she could hardly conceive how Madame Hermione, who never stirred from the Foljambe apartments, should think of teaching knowledge of the world to one who walked twice a week between Temple Bar and Lombard

Street, besides parading in the Park every Sunday that proved to be fair weather. Indeed, pretty Mistress Margaret was so little inclined to endure such remonstrances, that her intercourse with the inhabitants of the Foljambe apartments would have probably slackened as her circle of acquaintance increased in the external world, had she not, on the one hand, entertained an habitual reverence for her monitress, of which she could not divest herself, and been flattered, on the other, by being, to a certain degree, the depositary of a confidence for which others thirsted in vain. Besides, although the conversation of Hermione was uniformly serious, it was not in general either formal or severe; nor was the lady offended by flights of levity which Mistress Margaret sometimes ventured on in her presence, even when they were such as made Monna Paula cast her eyes upwards, and sigh with that compassion which a devotee extends towards the votaries of a trivial and profane world. Thus, upon the whole, the little maiden was disposed to submit, though not without some wincing, to the grave admonitions of the Lady Hermione; and the rather that the mystery annexed to the person of her monitress was in her mind early associated with a vague idea of wealth and importance, which had been rather confirmed than lessened by many accidental circumstances which she had noticed since she was more capable of observation.

It frequently happens that the counsel, which we reckon intrusive when offered to us unasked, becomes precious in our eyes when the pressure of difficulties renders us more diffident of our own judgment than we are apt to find ourselves in the hours of ease and indifference; and this is more especially the case if we suppose that our adviser may also possess power and inclination to back his counsel with effectual assistance. Mistress Margaret was now in that situation. She was, or believed herself to be, in a condition where both advice and assistance might be necessary; and it was therefore, after an anxious and sleepless night, that she resolved to have recourse to the Lady Hermione, who she knew would readily afford her the one, and, as she hoped, might also possess means of giving her the other. The conversation between them will best explain the purport of the visit.

CHAPTER XIX

> By this good light, a wench of matchless mettle!
> This were a leaguer-lass to love a soldier,
> To bind his wounds, and kiss his bloody brow,
> And sing a roundel as she helped to arm him,
> Though the rough foeman's drums were beat so nigh,
> They seem'd to bear the burden.
>
> *Old Play.*

When Mistress Margaret entered the Foljambe apartment, she found the inmates employed in their usual manner — the lady in reading, and her attendant in embroidering a large piece of tapestry, which had occupied her ever since Margaret had been first admitted within these secluded chambers.

Hermione nodded kindly to her visitor, but did not speak; and Margaret, accustomed to this reception, and in the present case not sorry for it, as it gave her an interval to collect her thoughts, stooped over Monna Paula's frame, and observed, in a half whisper, 'You were just so far as that rose, Monna, when I first saw you; see, there is the mark where I had the bad luck to spoil the flower in trying to catch the stitch — I was little above fifteen then. These flowers make me an old woman, Monna Paula.'

'I wish they could make you a wise one, my child,' answered Monna Paula, in whose esteem pretty Mistress Margaret did not stand quite so high as in that of her patroness; partly owing to her natural austerity, which was something intolerant of youth and gaiety, and partly to the jealousy with which a favourite domestic regards any one whom she considers as a sort of rival in the affections of her mistress.

'What is it you say to Monna, little one?' asked the lady.

'Nothing, madam,' replied Mistress Margaret, 'but that I have seen the real flowers blossom three times over since I first saw Monna Paula working in her canvas garden, and her violets have not budded yet.'

'True, lady-bird,' replied Hermione; 'but the buds that are longest in blossoming will last the longest in flower. You have seen them in the garden bloom thrice, but you have seen them fade thrice also; now, Monna Paula's will remain in blow for ever; they will fear neither frost nor tempest.'

'True, madam,' answered Mistress Margaret; 'but neither have they life or odour.'

'That, little one,' replied the recluse, 'is to compare a life agitated by hope and fear, and chequered with success and disappointment, and fevered by the effects of love and hatred — a life of passion and of feeling, saddened and shortened by its exhausting alternations — to a calm and tranquil existence, animated but by a sense of duties, and only employed, during its smooth and quiet course, in the unwearied discharge of them. Is that the moral of your answer?'

'I do not know, madam,' answered Mistress Margaret; 'but, of all birds in the air, I would rather be the lark, that sings while he is drifting down the summer breeze, than the weather-cock, that sticks fast yonder upon his iron perch, and just moves so much as to discharge his duty, and tell us which way the wind blows.'

'Metaphors are no arguments, my pretty maiden,' said the Lady Hermione, smiling.

'I am sorry for that, madam,' answered Margaret; 'for they are such a pretty indirect way of telling one's mind when it differs from one's betters; besides, on this subject there is no end of them, and they are so civil and becoming withal.'

'Indeed!' replied the lady; 'let me hear some of them, I pray you.'

'It would be, for example, very bold in me,' said Margaret, 'to say to your ladyship that, rather than live a quiet life, I would like a little variety of hope and fear, and liking and disliking — and — and — and the other sort of feelings which your ladyship is pleased to speak of; but I may say freely and without blame that I like a butterfly better than a beetle; or a trembling aspen better than a grim Scots fir, that never wags a leaf; or that, of all the wood, brass, and wire that ever my father's fingers put together, I do hate and detest a certain huge old clock of the German fashion, that rings hours and half hours, and quarters and half quarters, as if it were of such consequence that the world should know it was wound up and going. Now, dearest lady, I wish you would only compare that clumsy, clanging, Dutch-looking piece of lumber with the beautiful timepiece that Master Heriot caused my father to make for your ladyship, which uses to play a hundred merry tunes, and turns out, when it strikes the hour, a whole band of morrice-dancers, to trip the hays to the measure.'

'And which of these timepieces goes the truest, Margaret?' said the lady.

'I must confess the old Dutchman has the advantage in that,' said Margaret. 'I fancy you are right, madam, and that comparisons are no arguments, at least mine has not brought me through.'

'Upon my word, maiden Margaret,' said the lady, smiling, 'you have been of late thinking very much of these matters.'

'Perhaps too much, madam,' said Margaret, so low as only to be heard by the lady, behind the back of whose chair she had now placed herself. The words were spoken very gravely, and accompanied by a half sigh, which did not escape the attention of her to whom they were addressed. The Lady Hermione turned immediately round and looked earnestly at Margaret, then paused for a moment, and, finally, commanded Monna Paula to carry her frame and embroidery into the ante-chamber. When they were left alone, she desired her young friend to come from behind the chair, on the back of which she still rested, and sit down beside her upon a stool.

'I will remain thus, madam, under your favour,' answered Margaret, without changing her posture; 'I would rather you heard me without seeing me.'

'In God's name, maiden,' returned her patroness, 'what is it you can have to say that may not be uttered face to face to so true a friend as I am?'

Without making any direct answer, Margaret only replied, 'You were right, dearest lady, when you said I had suffered my feelings too much to engross me of late. I have done very wrong, and you will be angry with me — so will my godfather; but I cannot help it — he must be rescued.'

'*He!*' repeated the lady, with emphasis. 'That brief little word does, indeed, so far explain your mystery; but come from behind the chair, you silly popinjay! I will wager you have suffered yonder gay young apprentice to sit too near your heart. I have not heard you mention young Vincent for many a day; perhaps he has not been out of mouth and out of mind both. Have you been so foolish as to let him speak to you seriously? I am told he is a bold youth.'

'Not bold enough to say anything that could displease me, madam,' said Margaret.

'Perhaps, then, you were *not* displeased,' said the lady; 'or perhaps he has not *spoken*, which would be wiser and better. Be open-hearted, my love; your godfather will soon return, and we will take him into our consultations. If the young man is industrious, and come of honest parentage, his poverty may be no such insurmountable obstacle. But you are both of you very young, Margaret; I know your godfather will expect that the youth shall first serve out his apprenticeship.'

Margaret had hitherto suffered the lady to proceed under the mistaken impression which she had adopted simply because she could not tell how to interrupt her; but pure despite at hearing her last words gave her boldness at length to say, 'I crave your pardon, madam; but neither the youth you mention, nor any apprentice or master within the city of London —'

'Margaret,' said the lady, in reply, 'the contemptuous tone with which you mention those of your own class, many hundreds if not thousands of whom are in all respects better than yourself, and would greatly honour you by thinking of you, is, methinks, no warrant for the wisdom of your choice — for a choice, it seems, there is. Who is it, maiden, to whom you have thus rashly attached yourself? — rashly, I fear it must be.'

'It is the young Scottish Lord Glenvarloch, madam,' answered Margaret, in a low and modest tone, but sufficiently firm, considering the subject.

'The young Lord of Glenvarloch!' repeated the lady, in great surprise. 'Maiden, you are distracted in your wits.'

'I knew you would say so, madam,' answered Margaret. 'It is what another person has already told me; it is, perhaps, what all the world would tell me; it is what I am sometimes disposed to tell myself. But look at me, madam, for I will now come before you, and tell me if there is madness or distraction in my look and word when I repeat to you again, that I have fixed my affections on this young nobleman.'

'If there is not madness in your look or word, maiden, there is infinite folly in what you say,' answered the Lady Hermione, sharply. 'When did you ever hear that misplaced love brought anything but wretchedness? Seek a match among your equals, Margaret, and escape the countless kinds of risk and misery that must attend an affection beyond your degree. Why do you smile, maiden? Is there aught to cause scorn in what I say?'

'Surely no, madam,' answered Margaret. 'I only smiled to think how it should happen that, while rank made such a wide difference between creatures formed from the same clay, the wit of the vulgar should, nevertheless, jump so exactly the same length with that of the accomplished and the exalted. It is but the variation of the phrase which divides them. Dame Ursley told me the very same thing which your ladyship has but now uttered; only you, madam, talk of countless misery, and Dame Ursley spoke of the gallows, and Mistress Turner, who was hanged upon it.'

'Indeed!' answered the Lady Hermione; 'and who may Dame Ursley be, that your wise choice has associated with me in the difficult task of advising a fool?'

'The barber's wife at next door, madam,' answered Margaret, with feigned simplicity, but far from being sorry at heart that she had found an indirect mode of mortifying her monitress. 'She is the wisest woman that I know, next to your ladyship.'

'A proper confidante,' said the lady, 'and chosen with the same delicate sense of what is due to yourself and others! But what ails you, maiden — where are you going?'

'Only to ask Dame Ursley's advice,' said Margaret, as if about to depart; 'for I see your ladyship is too angry to give me any, and the emergency is pressing.'

'What emergency, thou simple one?' said the lady, in a kinder tone. 'Sit down, maiden, and tell me your tale. It is true you are a fool, and a pettish fool to boot; but then you are a child — an amiable child, with all your self-willed folly — and we must help you if we can. Sit down, I say, as you are desired, and you will find me a safer and wiser counsellor than the barber-woman. And tell me how you came to suppose that you have fixed your heart unalterably upon a man whom you have seen, as I think, but once.'

'I have seen him oftener,' said the damsel, looking down; 'but I have only spoken to him once. I should have been able to get that *once* out of my head, though the impression was so deep that I could even now repeat every trifling word he said, but other things have since riveted it in my bosom for ever.'

'Maiden,' replied the lady, '"for ever" is the word which comes most lightly on the lips in such circumstances, but which, not the less, is almost the last that we should use. The fashion of this world, its passions, its joys, and its sorrows, pass away like the winged breeze; there is nought for ever but that which belongs to the world beyond the grave.'

'You have corrected me justly, madam,' said Margaret, calmly; 'I ought only to have spoken of my present state of mind as what will last me for my lifetime, which unquestionably may be but short.'

'And what is there in this Scottish lord that can rivet what concerns him so closely in your fancy?' said the lady. 'I admit him a personable man, for I have seen him; and I will suppose him courteous and agreeable. But what are his accomplishments besides, for these surely are not uncommon attributes?'

'He is unfortunate, madam — most unfortunate, and surrounded by snares of different kinds, ingeniously contrived to ruin his character, destroy his estate, and, perhaps, to reach even his life. These schemes have been devised by avarice originally, but they are now followed close by vindictive ambition, animated, I think, by the absolute and concentrated spirit of malice; for the Lord Dalgarno —'

'Here, Monna Paula — Monna Paula!' exclaimed the Lady Hermione, interrupting her young friend's narrative. 'She hears me not,' she answered, rising and going out, 'I must seek her — I will return instantly.'

She returned accordingly very soon after. 'You mentioned a name which I thought was familiar to me,' she said; 'but Monna Paula has put me right. I know nothing of your lord — how was it you named him?'

'Lord Dalgarno,' said Margaret, 'the wickedest man who lives. Under pretence of friendship, he introduced the Lord Glenvarloch to a gambling-house with the purpose of engaging him in deep play; but he with whom the perfidious traitor had to deal was too virtuous, moderate, and cautious to be caught in a snare so open. What did they next but turn his own moderation against him, and persuade others that, because he would not become the prey of wolves, he herded with them for a share of their booty! And, while this base Lord Dalgarno was thus undermining his unsuspecting countryman, he took every measure to keep him surrounded by creatures of his own, to prevent him from attending court and mixing with those of his proper rank. Since the Gunpowder Treason, there never was a conspiracy more deeply laid, more basely and more deliberately pursued.'

The lady smiled sadly at Margaret's vehemence, but sighed the next moment, while she told her young friend how little she knew the world she was about to live in, since she testified so much surprise at finding it full of villainy.

'But by what means,' she added, 'could you, maiden, become possessed of the secret views of a man so cautious as Lord Dalgarno — as villains in general are?'

'Permit me to be silent on that subject,' said the maiden. 'I could not tell you without betraying others; let it suffice that my tidings are as certain as the means by which I acquired them are secret and sure. But I must not tell them even to you.'

'You are too bold, Margaret,' said the lady, 'to traffic in such matters at your early age. It is not only dangerous, but even unbecoming and unmaidenly.'

'I knew you would say that also,' said Margaret, with more meekness and patience than she usually showed on receiving reproof; 'but, God knows, my heart acquits me of every other feeling save that of the wish to assist this most innocent and betrayed man. I contrived to send him warning of his friend's falsehood; alas! my care has only hastened his utter ruin, unless speedy aid be found. He charged his false friend with treachery, and drew on him in the Park, and is now liable to the fatal penalty due for breach of privilege of the king's palace.'

'This is indeed an extraordinary tale,' said Hermione. 'Is Lord Glenvarloch then in prison?'

'No, madam, thank God, but in the sanctuary at Whitefriars. It is matter of doubt whether it will protect him in such a case: they speak of a warrant from the Lord Chief Justice. A gentleman of the Temple has been arrested, and is in trouble, for having assisted him in his flight. Even his taking temporary refuge in that base place, though from extreme necessity, will be used to the further defaming him. All this I know, and yet I cannot rescue him — cannot rescue him save by your means.'

'By my means, maiden?' said the lady; 'you are beside yourself! What means can I possess in this secluded situation of assisting this unfortunate nobleman?'

'You *have* means,' said Margaret, eagerly — 'you have those means, unless I mistake greatly, which can do anything — can do everything — in this city — in this world: you have wealth, and the command of a small portion of it will enable me to extricate him from his present danger. He will be enabled and directed how to make his escape; and I —' she paused.

'Will accompany him, doubtless, and reap the fruits of your sage exertions in his behalf?' said the Lady Hermione, ironically.

'May Heaven forgive you the unjust thought, lady,' answered Margaret. 'I will never see him more; but I shall have saved him, and the thought will make me happy.'

'A cold conclusion to so bold and warm a flame,' said the lady, with a smile which seemed to intimate incredulity.

'It is, however, the only one which I expect, madam — I could almost say the only one which I wish — I am sure I will use no efforts to bring about any other; if I am bold in his cause, I am timorous enough in my own. During our only interview I was unable to speak a word to him. He knows not the sound of my voice, and all that I have risked, and must yet risk, I am doing for one who, were he asked the question, would say he has long since forgotten that he ever saw, spoke to, or sat beside a creature of so little signification as I am.'

'This is a strange and unreasonable indulgence of a passion equally fanciful and dangerous,' said the Lady Hermione.

'You will *not* assist me, then?' said Margaret. 'Have good day then, madam. My secret, I trust, is safe in such honourable keeping.'

'Tarry yet a little,' said the lady, 'and tell me what resource you have to assist this youth, if you were supplied with money to put it in motion.'

'It is superfluous to ask me the question, madam,' answered Margaret, 'unless you propose to assist me; and, if you do so purpose, it is still superfluous. You could not understand the means I must use, and time is too brief to explain.'

'But have you in reality such means?' said the lady.

'I have, with the command of a moderate sum,' answered Margaret Ramsay, 'the power of baffling all his enemies — of eluding the passion of the irritated King — the colder but more determined displeasure of the Prince — the vindictive spirit of Buckingham, so hastily directed against whomsoever crosses the path of his ambition — the cold concentrated malice of Lord Dalgarno — all, I can baffle them all!'

'But is this to be done without your own personal risk, Margaret?' replied the lady; 'for, be your purpose what it will, you are not to peril your own reputation or person in the romantic attempt of serving another; and I, maiden, am answerable to your godfather — to your benefactor and my own — not to aid you in any dangerous or unworthy enterprise.'

'Depend upon my word —my oath, dearest lady,' replied the supplicant, 'that I will act by the agency of others, and do not myself design to mingle in any enterprise in which my appearance might be either perilous or unwomanly.'

'I know not what to do,' said the Lady Hermione; 'it is perhaps incautious and inconsiderate in me to aid so wild a project; yet the end seems honourable, if the means be sure. What is the penalty if he fall into their power?'

'Alas — alas! the loss of his right hand!' replied Margaret, her voice almost stifled with sobs.

'Are the laws of England so cruel! Then there is mercy in Heaven alone,' said the lady, 'since, even in this free land, men are wolves to each other. Compose yourself, Margaret, and tell me what money is necessary to secure Lord Glenvarloch's escape.'

'Two hundred pieces,' replied Margaret. 'I would speak to you of restoring them — and I must one day have the power — only that I know — that is, I think — your ladyship is indifferent on that score.'

'Not a word more of it,' said the lady; 'call Monna Paula hither.'

CHAPTER XX

Credit me, friend, it hath been ever thus,
Since the ark rested on Mount Ararat.
False man hath sworn, and woman hath believed,
Repented and reproach'd, and then believed once more.

The New World.

By the time that Margaret returned with Monna Paula, the Lady Hermione was rising from the table at which she had been engaged in writing something on a small slip of paper, which she gave to her attendant.

'Monna Paula,' she said, 'carry this paper to Roberts, the cash-keeper; let him give you the money mentioned in the note, and bring it hither presently.'

Monna Paula left the room, and her mistress proceeded.

'I do not know,' she said, 'Margaret, if I have done, and am doing, well in this affair. My life has been one of strange seclusion, and I am totally unacquainted with the practical ways of this world — an ignorance which I know cannot be remedied by mere reading. I fear I am doing wrong to you, and perhaps to the laws of the country which affords me refuge, by thus indulging you; and yet there is something in my heart which cannot resist your entreaties.'

'O, listen to it — listen to it, dear, generous lady!' said Margaret, throwing herself on her knees and grasping those of her benefactress, and looking in that attitude like a beautiful mortal in the act of supplicating her tutelary angel; 'the laws of men are but the injunctions of mortality, but what the heart prompts is the echo of the voice from Heaven within us.'

'Rise — rise, maiden,' said Hermione; 'you affect me more than I thought I could have been moved by aught that should approach me. Rise and tell me whence it comes that, in so short a time, your thoughts, your looks, your speech, and even your slightest actions, are changed from those of a capricious and fanciful girl to all this energy and impassioned eloquence of word and action?'

'I am sure I know not, dearest lady,' said Margaret, looking down; 'but I suppose that, when I was a trifler, I was only thinking of trifles. What I now reflect is deep and serious, and I am thankful if my speech and manner bear reasonable proportion to my thoughts.'

'It must be so,' said the lady; 'yet the change seems a rapid and strange one. It seems to be as if a childish girl had at once shot up into a deep-thinking and impassioned woman, ready to make exertions alike and sacrifices with all that vain devotion to a favourite object of affection which is often so basely rewarded.'

The Lady Hermione sighed bitterly, and Monna Paula entered ere the conversation proceeded farther. She spoke to her mistress in the foreign language in which they frequently conversed, but which was unknown to Margaret.

'We must have patience for a time,' said the lady to her visitor; 'the cash-keeper is abroad on some business, but he is expected home in the course of half an hour.'

Margaret wrung her hands in vexation and impatience.

'Minutes are precious,' continued the lady; 'that I am well aware of; and we will at least suffer none of them to escape us. Monna Paula shall remain below and transact our business the very instant that Roberts returns home.'

She spoke to her attendant accordingly, who again left the room.

'You are very kind, madam — very good,' said the poor little Margaret, while the anxious trembling of her lip and of her hand showed all that sickening agitation of the heart which arises from hope deferred.

'Be patient, Margaret, and collect yourself,' said the lady; 'you may — you must, have much to do to carry through this your bold purpose. Reserve your spirits, which you may need so much; be patient, it is the only remedy against the evils of life.'

'Yes, madam,' said Margaret, wiping her eyes, and endeavouring in vain to suppress the natural impatience of her temper, 'I have heard so — very often indeed; and I dare say I have myself, Heaven forgive me, said so to people in perplexity and affliction; but it was before I had suffered perplexity and vexation myself, and I am sure I will never preach patience to any human being again, now that I know how much the medicine goes against the stomach.'

'You will think better of it, maiden,' said the Lady Hermione. 'I also, when I first felt distress, thought they did me wrong who spoke to me of patience; but my sorrows have been repeated and continued till I have been taught to cling to it as the best, and — religious duties excepted, of which, indeed, patience forms a part — the only, alleviation which life can afford them.'

Margaret, who neither wanted sense nor feeling, wiped her tears hastily, and asked her patroness's forgiveness for her petulance.

'I might have thought,' she said — 'I ought to have reflected, that even from the manner of your life, madam, it is plain you must have suffered sorrow; and yet, God knows, the patience which I have ever seen you display well entitles you to recommend your own example to others.'

The lady was silent for a moment, and then replied —

'Margaret, I am about to repose a high confidence in you. You are no longer a child, but a thinking and a feeling woman. You have told me as much of your secret as you dared; I will let you know as much of mine as I may venture to tell. You will ask me, perhaps, why, at a moment when your own mind is agitated, I should force upon you the consideration of my sorrows? and I answer, that I cannot withstand the impulse which now induces me to do so. Perhaps, from having witnessed, for the first time these three years, the natural effects of human passion, my own sorrows have been awakened, and are for the moment too big for my own bosom; perhaps I may hope that you, who seem driving full sail on the very rock on which I was wrecked for ever, will take warning by the tale I have to tell. Enough, if you are willing to listen, I am willing to tell you who the melancholy inhabitant of the Foljambe apartments really is, and why she resides here. It will serve, at least, to while away the time until Monna Paula shall bring us the reply from Roberts.'

At any other moment of her life Margaret Ramsay would have heard with undivided interest a communication so flattering in itself, and referring to a subject upon which the general curiosity had been so strongly excited. And even at this agitating moment, although she ceased not to listen with an anxious ear and throbbing heart for the sound of Monna Paula's returning footsteps she nevertheless, as gratitude and policy, as well as a portion of curiosity, dictated, composed herself, in appearance at least, to the strictest attention to the Lady Hermione, and thanked her with humility for the high confidence she was pleased to repose in her. The Lady Hermione with the same calmness which always attended her speech and actions, thus recounted her story to her young friend:

'My father,' she said, 'was a merchant, but he was of a city whose merchants are princes. I am the daughter of a noble house in Genoa, whose name stood as high in honour and in antiquity as any inscribed in the Golden Register of that famous aristocracy.

'My mother was a noble Scottish woman. She was descended — do not start — and not remotely descended, of the house of Glenvarloch; no wonder that I was easily led to take concern in the misfortunes of this young lord. He is my near relation, and my mother, who was more than sufficiently proud of her descent, early taught me to take an interest in the name. My maternal grandfather, a cadet of that house of Glenvarloch, had followed the fortunes of an unhappy fugitive, Francis Earl of Bothwell, who, after showing his miseries in many a foreign court, at length settled in Spain upon a miserable pension, which he earned by conforming to the Catholic faith. Ralph Olifaunt, my grandfather, separated from him in disgust, and settled at Barcelona, where, by the friendship of the governor, his heresy, as it was termed, was connived at. My father, in the course of his commerce, resided more at Barcelona than in his native country, though at times he visited Genoa.

'It was at Barcelona that he became acquainted with my mother, loved her, and married her; they differed in faith, but they agreed in affection. I was their only child. In public I conformed to the doctrines and ceremonial of the Church of Rome; but my mother, by whom these were regarded with horror, privately trained me up in those of the Reformed religion; and my father, either indifferent in the matter or unwilling to distress the woman whom he loved, overlooked or connived at my secretly joining in her devotions.

'But when, unhappily, my father was attacked, while yet in the prime of life, by a slow wasting disease, which he felt to be incurable, he foresaw the hazard to which his widow and orphan might be exposed, after he was no more, in a country so bigoted to Catholicism as Spain. He made it his business, during the two last years of his life, to realise and to remit to England a large part of his fortune, which, by the faith and honour of his correspondent, the excellent man under whose roof I now reside, was employed to great advantage. Had my father lived to complete his purpose, by withdrawing his whole fortune from commerce, he himself would have accompanied us to England, and would have beheld us settled in peace and honour before his death. But Heaven had ordained it otherwise. He died, leaving several sums engaged in the hands of his Spanish debtors; and, in particular, he had made a large and extensive consignment to a certain wealthy society of merchants at Madrid, who showed no willingness after his death to account for the proceeds. Would to God we had left these covetous and wicked men in possession of their booty, for such they seemed to hold the property of their deceased correspondent and friend! We had enough for comfort, and even splendour, already secured in England; but friends exclaimed upon the folly of permitting these unprincipled men to plunder us of our rightful property. The sum itself was large, and the claim having been made, my mother thought that my father's memory was interested in its being enforced, especially as the defences set up for the mercantile society went, in some degree, to impeach the fairness of his transactions.

'We went therefore to Madrid. I was then, my Margaret, about your age, young and thoughtless, as you have hitherto been. We went, I say, to Madrid, to solicit the protection of the court and of the king, without which we were told it would be in vain to expect justice against an opulent and powerful association.

'Our residence at the Spanish metropolis drew on from weeks to months. For my part, my natural sorrow for a kind, though not a fond, father having abated, I cared not if the lawsuit had detained us at Madrid for ever. My mother permitted herself and me rather more liberty than we had been accustomed to. She found relations among the Scottish and Irish officers, many of whom held a high rank in the Spanish armies; their wives and daughters became our friends and companions, and I had perpetual occasion to exercise my mother's native language, which I had learned from my infancy. By degrees, as my mother's spirits were low and her health indifferent, she was induced, by her partial fondness for me, to suffer me to mingle occasionally in society which she herself did not frequent, under the guardianship of such ladies as she imagined she could trust, and particularly under the care of the lady of a general officer, whose weakness or falsehood was the original cause of my misfortunes. I was as gay, Margaret, and thoughtless — I again repeat it — as you were but lately, and my attention, like yours, became suddenly riveted to one object, and to one set of feelings.

'The person by whom they were excited was young, noble, handsome, accomplished, a soldier, and a Briton. So far our cases are nearly parallel; but, may Heaven forbid that the parallel should become complete! This man, so noble, so fairly formed, so gifted, and so brave — this *villain*, for that, Margaret, was his fittest name — spoke of love to me, and I listened. Could I suspect his sincerity? If he was wealthy, noble, and long-descended, I also was a noble and an opulent heiress. It is true, that he neither knew the extent of my father's wealth, nor did I communicate to him — I do not even remember if I myself knew it at the time — the important circumstance, that the greater part of that wealth was beyond the grasp of arbitrary power, and not subject to the precarious award of arbitrary judges. My lover might think, perhaps, as my mother was desirous the world at large should believe, that almost our whole fortune depended on the precarious suit which we had come to Madrid to prosecute — a belief which she had countenanced out of policy, being well aware that a knowledge of my father's having remitted such a large part of his fortune to England would in no shape aid the recovery of further sums in the Spanish courts. Yet, with no more extensive views of my fortune than were possessed by the public, I believe that he of whom I am speaking was at first sincere in his pretensions. He had himself interest sufficient to have obtained a decision in our favour in the courts, and my fortune, reckoning only what was in Spain, would then have been no inconsiderable sum. To be brief, whatever might be his motives of temptation for so far committing himself, he applied to my mother for my hand, with my consent and approval. My mother's judgment had become weaker, but her passions had become more irritable, during her increasing illness.

'You have heard of the bitterness of the ancient Scottish feuds, of which it may be said, in the language of Scripture, that the fathers eat sour grapes, and the teeth of the children are set on edge. Unhappily — I should say *happily*, considering what this man has now shown himself to be — some such strain of bitterness had divided his house from my mother's, and she had succeeded to the inheritance of hatred. When he asked her for my hand, she was no longer able to command her passions: she raked up every injury which the rival families had inflicted upon each other during a bloody feud of two centuries, heaped him with epithets of scorn, and rejected his proposal of alliance as if it had come from the basest of mankind.

'My lover retired in passion; and I remained to weep and murmur against my fortune, and — I will confess my fault — against my affectionate parent. I had been educated with different feelings, and the traditions of the feuds and quarrels of my mother's family in Scotland, which were to her monuments and chronicles, seemed to me as insignificant and unmeaning as the actions and fantasies of Don Quixote; and I blamed my mother bitterly for sacrificing my happiness to an empty dream of family dignity.

'While I was in this humour, my lover sought a renewal of our intercourse. We met repeatedly in the house of the lady whom I have mentioned, and who, in levity or in the spirit of intrigue, countenanced our secret correspondence. At length we were secretly married; so far did my blinded passion hurry me. My lover had secured the assistance of a clergyman of the English Church. Monna Paula, who had been my attendant from infancy, was one witness of our union. Let me do the faithful creature justice. She conjured me to suspend my purpose till my mother's death should permit us to celebrate our marriage openly; but the entreaties of my lover, and my own wayward passion, prevailed over her remonstrances. The lady I have spoken of was another witness, but whether she was in full possession of my bridegroom's secret I had never the means to learn. But the shelter of her name and roof afforded us the means of frequently meeting, and the love of my husband seemed as sincere and as unbounded as my own.

'He was eager, he said, to gratify his pride by introducing me to one or two of his noble English friends. This could not be done at Lady D—'s; but by his command, which I was now entitled to consider as my law, I contrived twice to visit him at his own hotel, accompanied only by Monna Paula. There was a very small party of two ladies and two gentlemen. There was music, mirth, and dancing. I had heard of the frankness of the English nation, but I could not help thinking it bordered on license during these entertainments, and in the course of the collation which followed; but I imputed my scruples to my inexperience, and would not doubt the propriety of what was approved by my husband.

'I was soon summoned to other scenes. My poor mother's disease drew to a conclusion. Happy I am that it took place before she discovered what would have cut her to the soul.

'In Spain you may have heard how the Catholic priests, and particularly the monks, besiege the beds of the dying, to obtain bequests for the good of the church. I have said that my mother's temper was irritated by disease, and her judgment impaired in proportion. She gathered spirits and force from the resentment which the priests around her bed excited by their importunity, and the boldness of the stern sect of Reformers to which she had secretly adhered seemed to animate her dying tongue. She avowed the religion she had so long concealed; renounced all hope and aid which did not come by and through its dictates; rejected with contempt the ceremonial of the Romish Church; loaded the astonished priests with reproaches for their greediness and hypocrisy; and commanded them to leave her house. They went in bitterness and rage, but it was to return with the Inquisitorial power, its warrants, and its officers; and they found only the cold corpse left of her on whom they had hoped to work their vengeance. As I was soon discovered to have shared my mother's heresy, I was dragged from her dead body, imprisoned in a solitary cloister, and treated with severity, which the abbess assured me was due to the looseness of my life, as well as my spiritual errors. I avowed my marriage, to justify the situation in which I found myself. I implored the assistance of the superior to communicate my situation to my husband. She smiled coldly at the proposal, and told me the church had provided a better spouse for me; advised me to secure myself of Divine grace hereafter, and deserve milder treatment here, by presently taking the veil. In order to convince me that I had no other resource, she showed me a royal decree, by which all my estate was hypothecated to the convent of St. Magdalen, and became their complete property upon my death or my taking the vows. As I was, both from religious principle and affectionate attachment to my husband, absolutely immovable in my rejection of the veil, I believe — may Heaven forgive me if I wrong her! — that the abbess was desirous to make sure of my spoils by hastening the former event.

'It was a small and a poor convent, and situated among the mountains of Guadarrama. Some of the sisters were the daughters of neighbouring hidalgoes, as poor as they were proud and ignorant; others were women immured there on account of their vicious conduct. The superior herself was of a high family, to which she owed her situation; but she was said to have disgraced her connexions by her conduct during youth, and now, in advanced age, covetousness and the love of power, a spirit, too, of severity and cruelty, had succeeded to the thirst after licentious pleasure. I suffered much under this woman; and still her dark, glassy eye, her tall shrouded form, and her rigid features, haunt my slumbers.

'I was not destined to be a mother. I was very ill, and my recovery was long doubtful. The most violent remedies were applied, if remedies they indeed were. My health was restored at length, against my own expectation and that of all around me. But when I first again beheld the reflection of my own face, I thought it was the visage of a ghost. I was wont to be flattered by all, particularly by my husband, for the fineness of my complexion; it was now totally gone, and, what is more extraordinary, it has never returned. I have observed that the few who now see me look upon me as a bloodless phantom. Such has been the abiding effect of the treatment to which I was subjected. May God forgive those who were the agents of it! I thank Heaven, I can say so with as sincere a wish as that with which I pray for forgiveness of my own sins. They now relented somewhat towards me — moved, perhaps, to compassion by my singular appearance, which bore witness to my sufferings; or afraid that the matter might attract attention during a visitation of the bishop which was approaching. One day, as I was walking in the convent garden, to which I had been lately admitted, a miserable old Moorish slave, who was kept to cultivate the little spot, muttered as I passed him, but still keeping his wrinkled face and decrepit form in the same angle with the earth, "There is heart's-ease near the postern."

'I knew something of the symbolical language of flowers, once carried to such perfection among the Moriscoes of Spain; but if I had been ignorant of it, the captive would soon have caught at any hint that seemed to promise liberty. With all the haste consistent with the utmost circumspection, for I might be observed by the abbess or some of the sisters from the window, I hastened to the postern. It was closely barred as usual; but when I coughed slightly I was answered from the other side, and, O Heaven! it was my husband's voice which said, "Lose not a minute here at present, but be on this spot when the vesper bell has tolled."

'I retired in an ecstasy of joy. I was not entitled or permitted to assist at vespers, but was accustomed to be confined to my cell while the nuns were in the choir. Since my recovery, they had discontinued locking the door, though the utmost severity was denounced against me if I left these precincts. But, let the penalty be what it would, I hastened to dare it. No sooner had the last toll of the vesper bell ceased to sound than I stole from my chamber, reached the garden unobserved, hurried to the postern, beheld it open with rapture, and in the next moment was in my husband's arms. He had with him another cavalier of noble mien; both were masked and armed. Their horses, with one saddled for my use, stood in a thicket hard by, with two other masked horsemen, who seemed to be servants. In less than two minutes we were mounted, and rode off as fast as we could through rough and devious roads, in which one of the domestics appeared to act as guide.

'The hurried pace at which we rode, and the anxiety of the moment, kept me silent, and prevented my expressing my surprise or my joy save in a few broken words. It also served as an apology for my husband's silence. At length we stopped at a solitary hut, the cavaliers dismounted, and I was assisted from my saddle, not by M— M—, my husband, I would say, who seemed busied about his horse, but by the stranger.

'"Go into the hut," said my husband, "change your dress with the speed of lightning; you will find one to assist you; we must forward instantly when you have shifted your apparel."

'I entered the hut, and was received in the arms of the faithful Monna Paula, who had waited my arrival for many hours, half distracted with fear and anxiety. With her assistance I speedily tore off the detested garments of the convent, and exchanged them for a travelling-suit made after the English fashion. I observed that Monna Paula was in a similar dress. I had but just huddled on my change of attire, when we were hastily summoned to mount. A horse, I found, was provided for Monna Paula, and we resumed our route. On the way, my convent garb, which had been wrapped hastily together around a stone, was thrown into a lake, along the verge of which we were then passing. The two cavaliers rode together in front, my attendant and I followed, and the servants brought up the rear. Monna Paula, as we rode on, repeatedly entreated me to be silent upon the road, as our lives depended on it. I was easily reconciled to be passive, for, the first fever of spirits which attended the sense of liberation and of gratified affection having passed away, I felt as it were dizzy with the rapid motion; and my utmost exertion was necessary to keep my place on the saddle, until we suddenly — it was now very dark — saw a strong light before us.

'My husband reined up his horse, and gave a signal by a low whistle twice repeated, which was answered from a distance. The whole party then halted under the boughs of a large cork-tree, and my husband, drawing himself close to my side, said, in a voice which I then thought was only embarrassed by fear for my safety — "We must now part. Those to whom I commit you are *contrabandists*, who only know you as Englishwomen, but who, for a high bribe, have undertaken to escort you through the passes of the Pyrenees as far as St. Jean de Luz."

'"And do *you* not go with us?" I exclaimed with emphasis, though in a whisper.

'"It is impossible," he said, "and would ruin all. See that you speak in English in these people's hearing, and give not the least sign of understanding what they say in Spanish — your life depends on it; for, though they live in opposition to, and evasion of, the laws of Spain, they would tremble at the idea of violating those of the church. I see them coming — farewell — farewell."

'The last words were hastily uttered. I endeavoured to detain him yet a moment by my feeble grasp on his cloak.

'"You will meet me, then, I trust, at St. Jean de Luz."

'"Yes — yes," he answered hastily, "at St. Jean de Luz you will meet your protector."

'He then extricated his cloak from my grasp, and was lost in the darkness. His companion approached, kissed my hand, which in the agony of the moment I was scarce sensible of, and followed my husband, attended by one of the domestics.'

The tears of Hermione here flowed so fast as to threaten the interruption of her narrative. When she resumed it, it was with a kind of apology to Margaret.

'Every circumstance,' she said, 'occurring in those moments, when I still enjoyed a delusive idea of happiness, is deeply imprinted in my remembrance, which, respecting all that has since happened, is waste and unvaried as an Arabian desert. But I have no right to inflict on you, Margaret, agitated as you are with your own anxieties the unavailing details of my useless recollections.'

Margaret's eyes were full of tears; it was impossible it could be otherwise, considering that the tale was told by her suffering benefactress, and resembled in some respects her own situation; and yet she must not be severely blamed if, while eagerly pressing her patroness to continue her narrative, her eye involuntarily sought the door, as if to chide the delay of Monna Paula.

The Lady Hermione saw and forgave these conflicting emotions; and she too must be pardoned if, in her turn, the minute detail of her narrative showed that, in the discharge of feelings so long locked in her own bosom, she rather forgot those which were personal to her auditor, and by which it must be supposed Margaret's mind was principally occupied, if not entirely engrossed.

'I told you, I think, that one domestic followed the gentlemen,' thus the lady continued her story; 'the other remained with us for the purpose, as it seemed, of introducing us to two persons whom M—, I say, whom my husband's signal had brought to the spot. A word or two of explanation passed between them and the servant, in a sort of *patois* which I did not understand; and one of the strangers taking hold of my bridle, the other of Monna Paula's, they led us towards the light, which I have already said was the signal of our halting. I touched Monna Paula, and was sensible that she trembled very much, which surprised me, because I knew her character to be so strong and bold as to border upon the masculine.

'When we reached the fire, the gipsy figures of those who surrounded it, with their swarthy features, large sombrero hats, girdles stuck full of pistols and poniards, and all the other apparatus of a roving and perilous life, would have terrified me at another moment. But then I only felt the agony of having parted from my husband almost in the very moment of my rescue. The females of the gang — for there were four or five women amongst these contraband traders — received us with a sort of rude courtesy. They were, in dress and manners, not extremely different from the men with whom they associated — were almost as hardy and adventurous, carried arms like them, and were, as we learned from passing circumstances, scarce less experienced in the use of them.

'It was impossible not to fear these wild people; yet they gave us no reason to complain of them, but used us on all occasions with a kind of clumsy courtesy, accommodating themselves to our wants and our weakness during the journey, even while we heard them grumbling to each other against our effeminacy — like some rude carrier, who, in charge of a package of valuable and fragile ware, takes every precaution for its preservation, while he curses the unwonted trouble which it occasions him. Once or twice, when they were disappointed in their contraband traffic, lost some goods in a rencontre with the Spanish officers of the revenue, and were finally pursued by a military force, their murmurs assumed a more alarming tone in the terrified ears of my attendant and myself, when, without daring to seem to understand them, we heard them curse the insular heretics, on whose account God, St. James, and Our Lady of the Pillar had blighted their hopes of profit. These are dreadful recollections, Margaret.'

'Why, then, dearest lady,' answered Margaret, 'will you thus dwell on them?'

'It is only,' said the Lady Hermione, 'because I linger like a criminal on the scaffold, and would fain protract the time that must inevitably bring on the final catastrophe. Yes, dearest Margaret, I rest and dwell on the events of that journey, marked as it was by fatigue and danger, though the road lay through the wildest and most desolate deserts and mountains, and though our companions, both men and women, were fierce and lawless themselves, and exposed to the most merciless retaliation from those with whom they were constantly engaged — yet would I rather dwell on these hazardous events than tell that which awaited me at St. Jean de Luz.'

'But you arrived there in safety?' said Margaret.

'Yes, maiden,' replied the Lady Hermione; 'and were guided by the chief of our outlawed band to the house which had been assigned for our reception, with the same punctilious accuracy with which he would have delivered a bale of uncustomed goods to a correspondent. I was told a gentleman had expected me for two days; I rushed into the apartment, and, when I expected to embrace my husband — I found myself in the arms of his friend!'

'The villain!' exclaimed Margaret, whose anxiety had, in spite of herself, been a moment suspended by the narrative of the lady.

'Yes,' replied Hermione, calmly, though her voice somewhat faltered, 'it is the name that best — that well befits him. He, Margaret, for whom I had sacrificed all — whose love and whose memory were dearer to me than my freedom, when I was in the convent — than my life, when I was on my perilous journey — had taken his measures to shake me off, and transfer me, as a privileged wanton, to the protection of his libertine friend. At first the stranger laughed at my tears and my agony, as the hysterical passion of a deluded and overreached wanton, or the wily affectation of a courtezan. My claim of marriage he laughed at, assuring me he knew it was a mere farce required by me, and submitted to by his friend, to save some reserve of delicacy; and expressed his surprise that I should consider in any other light a ceremony which could be valid neither in Spain nor England, and insultingly offered to remove my scruples by renewing such a union with me himself. My exclamations brought Monna Paula to my aid; she was not, indeed, far distant, for she had expected some such scene.'

'Good Heaven!' said Margaret, 'was she a confidante of your base husband?'

'No,' answered Hermione, 'do her not that injustice. It was her persevering inquiries that discovered the place of my confinement; it was she who gave the information to my husband, and who remarked even then that the news was so much more interesting to his friend than to him, that she suspected, from an early period, it was the purpose of the villain to shake me off. On the journey, her suspicions were confirmed. She had heard him remark to his companion, with a cold sarcastic sneer, the total change which my prison and my illness had made on my complexion; and she had heard the other reply, that the defect might be cured by a touch of Spanish red. This and other circumstances having prepared her for such treachery, Monna Paula now entered, completely possessed of herself, and prepared to support me. Her calm representations went farther with the stranger than the expressions of my despair. If he did not entirely believe our tale, he at least acted the part of a man of honour, who would not intrude himself on defenceless females, whatever was their character; desisted from persecuting us with his presence; and not only directed Monna Paula how we should journey to Paris, but furnished her with money for the purpose of our journey. From the capital I wrote to Master Heriot, my father's most trusted correspondent; he came instantly to Paris on receiving the letter; and — But here comes Monna Paula, with more than the sum you desired. Take it, my dearest maiden; serve this youth if you will. But, O Margaret, look for no gratitude in return!'

The Lady Hermione took the bag of gold from her attendant and gave it to her young friend, who threw herself into her arms, kissed her on both the pale cheeks, over which the sorrows so newly awakened by her narrative had drawn many tears, then sprung up, wiped her own overflowing eyes, and left the Foljambe apartments with a hasty and resolved step.

CHAPTER XXI

Rove not from pole to pole. The man lives here
Whose razor 's only equall'd by his beer;
And where, in either sense, the cockney put
May, if he pleases, get confounded *cut.*

On the Sign of an Alehouse kept by a Barber.

We are under the necessity of transporting our readers to the habitation of Benjamin Suddlechop, the husband of the active and efficient Dame Ursula, and who also, in his own person, discharged more offices than one. For, besides trimming locks and beards, and turning whiskers upward into the martial and swaggering curl, or downward into the drooping form which became mustaches of civil policy; besides also occasionally letting blood, either by cupping or by the lancet, extracting a stump, and performing other actions of petty pharmacy, very nearly as well as his neighbour Raredrench, the apothecary, he could, on occasion, draw a cup of beer as well as a tooth, tap a hogshead as well as a vein, and wash, with a draught of good ale, the mustaches which his art had just trimmed. But he carried on these trades apart from each other.

His barber's shop projected its long and mysterious pole into Fleet Street, painted party-coloured-wise, to represent the ribbons with which, in elder times, that ensign was garnished. In the window were seen rows of teeth displayed upon strings like rosaries; cups with a red rag at the bottom, to resemble blood — an intimation that patients might be bled, cupped, or blistered, with the assistance of 'sufficient advice'; while the more profitable, but less honourable, operations upon the hair of the head and beard were briefly and gravely announced. Within was the well-worn leathern chair for customers, the guitar, then called a ghittern or cittern, with which a customer might amuse himself till his predecessor was dismissed from under Benjamin's hands, and which, therefore, often flayed the ears of the patient metaphorically, while his chin sustained from the razor literal scarification. All, therefore, in this department spoke the chirurgeon-barber, or the barber-chirurgeon.

But there was a little back room, used as a private tap-room, which had a separate entrance by a dark and crooked alley, which communicated with Fleet Street, after a circuitous passage through several bye lanes and courts. This retired temple of Bacchus had also a connexion with Benjamin's more public shop by a long and narrow entrance, conducting to the secret premises in which a few old topers used to take their morning-draught, and a few gill-sippers their modicum of strong waters, in a bashful way, after having entered the barber's shop under pretence of being shaved. Besides, this obscure tap-room gave a separate admission to the apartments of Dame Ursley, which she was believed to make use of in the course of her multifarious practice, both to let herself secretly out and to admit clients and employers who cared not to be seen to visit her in public. Accordingly, after the hour of noon, by which time the modest and timid whetters, who were Benjamin's best customer's, had each had his draught or his thimbleful, the business of the tap was in a manner ended, and the charge of attending the back door passed from one of the barber's apprentices to the little mulatto girl, the dingy Iris of Dame Suddlechop. Then came mystery thick upon mystery: muffled gallants and masked females, in disguises of different fashions, were seen to glide through the intricate mazes of the alley; and even the low tap on the door, which frequently demanded the attention of the little Creole, had in it something that expressed secrecy and fear of discovery.

It was the evening of the same day when Margaret had held the long conference with the Lady Hermione, that Dame Suddlechop had directed her little portress to 'keep the door fast as a miser's purse-strings; and, as she valued her saffron skin, to let in none but —' the name she added in a whisper, and accompanied it with a nod. The little domestic blinked intelligence, went to her post, and in brief time thereafter admitted and ushered into the presence of the dame that very city gallant whose clothes sat awkwardly upon him, and who had behaved so doughtily in the fray which befell at Nigel's first visit to Beaujeu's ordinary. The mulatto introduced him — 'Missis, fine young gentleman, all over gold and velvet' — then muttered to herself as she shut the door, 'Fine young gentleman, he! — apprentice to him who makes the tick-tick.'

It was indeed — we are sorry to say it, and trust our readers will sympathise with the interest we take in the matter — it was indeed honest Jin Vin, who had been so far left to his own devices, and abandoned by his better angel, as occasionally to travesty himself in this fashion, and to visit, in the dress of a gallant of the day, those places of pleasure and dissipation in which it

Fleet Street and Chancery Lane

would have been everlasting discredit to him to have been seen in his real character and condition; that is, had it been possible for him in his proper shape to have gained admission. There was now a deep gloom on his brow, his rich habit was hastily put on, and buttoned awry; his belt buckled in a most disorderly fashion, so that his sword stuck outwards from his side, instead of hanging by it with graceful negligence; while his poniard, though fairly hatched and gilded, stuck in his girdle like a butcher's steel in the fold of his blue apron. Persons of fashion had, by the way, the advantage formerly of being better distinguished from the vulgar than at present; for, what the ancient farthingale and more modern hoop were to court ladies, the sword was to the gentleman — an article of dress which only rendered those ridiculous who assumed it for the nonce, without being in the habit of wearing it. Vincent's rapier got between his legs, and, as he stumbled over it, he exclaimed —'Zounds! 't is the second time it has served me thus. I believe the damned trinket knows I am no true gentleman, and does it of set purpose.'

'Come — come, mine honest Jin Vin — come, my good boy,' said the dame, in a soothing tone, 'never mind these trankums; a frank and hearty London 'prentice is worth all the gallants of the inns of court.'

'I *was* a frank and hearty London 'prentice before I knew you, Dame Suddlechop,' said Vincent. 'What your advice has made me, you may find a name for; since, fore George, I am ashamed to think about it myself.'

'A-well-a-day,' quoth the dame, 'and is it even so with thee? — nay, then, I know but one cure'; and with that, going to a little corner cupboard of carved wainscot, she opened it by the assistance of a key which, with half a dozen besides, hung in a silver chain at her girdle, and produced a long flask of thin glass cased with wicker, bringing forth at the same time two Flemish rummer glasses, with long stalks and capacious wombs. She filled the one brimful for her guest, and the other more modestly to about two-thirds of its capacity for her own use, repeating, as the rich cordial trickled forth in a smooth oily stream — 'Right rosa solis, as ever washed mulligrubs out of a moody brain!'

But, though Jin Vin tossed off his glass without scruple, while the lady sipped hers more moderately, it did not appear to produce the expected amendment upon his humour. On the contrary, as he threw himself into the great leathern chair in which Dame Ursley was wont to solace herself of an evening, he declared himself 'the most miserable dog within the sound of Bow Bell.'

'And why should you be so idle as to think yourself so, silly boy?' said Dame Suddlechop; 'but 't is always thus: fools and children never know when they are well. Why, there is not one that walks in St. Paul's, whether in flat cap or hat and feather, that has so many kind glances from the wenches as you, when ye swagger along Fleet Street with your bat under your arm, and your cap set aside upon your head. Thou knowest well that, from Mrs. Deputy's self down to the waistcoateers in the alley, all of them are twiring and peeping betwixt their fingers when you pass; and yet you call yourself a miserable dog! and I must tell you all this over and over again as if I were whistling the chimes of London to a pettish child, in order to bring the pretty baby into good-humour!'

The flattery of Dame Ursula seemed to have the fate of her cordial: it was swallowed, indeed, by the party to whom she presented it, and that with some degree of relish, but it did not operate as a sedative on the disturbed state of the youth's mind. He laughed for an instant, half in scorn and half in gratified vanity, but cast a sullen look on Dame Ursley as he replied to her last words —

'You do treat me like a child indeed, when you sing over and over to me a cuckoo song that I care not a copper-filing for.'

'Aha!' said Dame Ursley; 'that is to say, you care not if you please all, unless you please one. You are a true lover, I warrant, and care not for all the city, from here to Whitechapel, so you could write yourself first in your pretty Peg-a-Ramsay's good-will. Well — well, take patience, man, and be guided by me, for I will be the hoop will bind you together at last.'

'It is time you were so,' said Jenkin, 'for hitherto you have rather been the wedge to separate us.'

Dame Suddlechop had by this time finished her cordial; it was not the first she had taken that day, and, though a woman of strong brain, and cautious at least, if not abstemious, in her potations, it may nevertheless be supposed that her patience was not improved by the regimen which she observed.

'Why, thou ungracious and ingrate knave,' said Dame Ursley, 'have not I done everything to put thee in thy mistress's good graces? She loves gentry, the proud Scottish minx, as a Welshman loves cheese, and has her father's descent from that Duke of Daldevil, or whatsoever she calls him, as close in her heart as gold in a miser's chest, though she as seldom shows it; and none she will think of, or have, but a gentleman; and a gentleman I have made of thee, Jin Vin, the devil cannot deny that.'

'You have made a fool of me,' said poor Jenkin, looking at the sleeve of his jacket.

'Never the worse gentleman for that,' said Dame Ursely, laughing.

'And what is worse,' said he, turning his back to her suddenly, and writhing in his chair, 'you have made a rogue of me.'

'Never the worse gentleman for that neither,' said Dame Ursley, in the same tone; 'let a man bear his folly gaily and his knavery stoutly, and let me see if gravity or honesty will look him in the face nowadays. Tut, man, it was only in the time of King Arthur or King Lud that a gentleman was held to blemish his scutcheon by a leap over the line of reason or honesty. It is the bold look, the ready hand, the fine clothes, the brisk oath, and the wild brain that makes the gallant nowadays.'

'I know what you have made me,' said Jin Vin; 'since I have given up skittles and trap-ball for tennis and bowls, good English ale for thin Bordeaux and sour Rhenish, roast-beef and pudding for woodcocks and kickshaws, my bat for a sword, my cap for a beaver, my "forsooth" for a modish oath, my Christmas-box for a dice-box, my religion for the devil's matins, and mine honest name for — Woman, I could brain thee, when I think whose advice has guided me in all this!'

'Whose advice, then? — whose advice, then? Speak out, thou poor petty, cloak-brusher, and say who advised thee!' retorted Dame Ursley, flushed and indignant. 'Marry come up, my paltry companion; say by whose advice you have made a gamester of yourself, and a thief besides, as your words would bear — the Lord deliver us from evil!' And here Dame Ursley devoutly crossed herself.

'Hark ye, Dame Ursley Suddlechop,' said Jenkin, starting up, his dark eyes flashing with anger; 'remember I am none of your husband; and, if I were, you would do well not to forget whose threshold was swept when they last rode the Skimmington[1] upon such another scolding jade as yourself.'

'I hope to see you ride up Holborn next,' said Dame Ursley, provoked out of all her holyday and sugar-plum expressions, 'with a nosegay at your breast and a parson at your elbow!'

'That may well be,' answered Jin Vin, bitterly, 'if I walk by your counsels as I have begun by them; but, before that day comes, you shall know that Jin Vin has the brisk boys of Fleet Street still at his wink. Yes, you jade, you shall be carted for bawd and conjurer, double-dyed in grain, and bing off to Bridewell, with every brass basin betwixt the Bar and Paul's beating before you, as if the devil were banging them with his beef-hook.'

Dame Ursley coloured like scarlet, seized upon the half-emptied flask of cordial, and seemed, by her first gesture, about to hurl it at the head of her adversary; but suddenly, and as if by a strong internal effort, she checked her outrageous resentment, and, putting the bottle to its more legitimate use, filled, with wonderful composure, the two glasses, and, taking up one of them, said, with a smile, which better became her comely and jovial countenance than the fury by which it was animated the moment before —

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[1] See Note 1.

'Here is to thee, Jin Vin, my lad, in all loving-kindness, whatever spite thou bearest to me, that have always been a mother to thee.'

Jenkin's English good-nature could not resist this forcible appeal; he took up the other glass, and lovingly pledged the dame in her cup of reconciliation, and proceeded to make a kind of grumbling apology for his own violence.

'For you know,' he said, 'it was you persuaded me to get these fine things, and go to that godless ordinary, and ruffle it with the best, and bring you home all the news; and you said I, that was the cock of the ward, would soon be the cock of the ordinary, and would win ten times as much at gleek and primero as I used to do at put and beggar-my-neighbour, and turn up doublets with the dice as busily as I was wont to trowl down the nine-pins in the skittle-ground; and then you said I should bring you such news out of the ordinary as should make us all, when used as you knew how to use it; and now you see what is to come of it all!'

''T is all true thou sayest, lad,' said the dame; 'but thou must have patience. Rome was not built in a day. You cannot become used to your court suit in a month's time, any more than when you changed your long coat for a doublet and hose; and in gaming you must expect to lose as well as gain; 't is the sitting gamester sweeps the board.'

'The board has swept me, I know,' replied Jin Vin, 'and that pretty clean out. I would that were the worst; but I owe for all this finery, and settling-day is coming on, and my master will find my accompt worse than it should be by a score of pieces. My old father will be called in to make them good; and I—may save the hangman a labour and do the job myself, or go the Virginia voyage.'

'Do not speak so loud, my dear boy,' said Dame Ursley; 'but tell me why you borrow not from a friend to make up your arrear. You could lend him as much when his settling-day came round.'

'No—no, I have had enough of that work,' said Vincent. 'Tunstall would lend me the money, poor fellow, an he had it; but his gentle, beggarly kindred plunder him of all, and keep him as bare as a birch at Christmas. No — my fortune may be spelt in four letters, and these read, RUIN.'

'Now hush, you simple craven,' said the dame; 'did you never hear that when the need is highest the help is nighest? We may find aid for you yet, and sooner than you are aware of. I am sure I would never have advised you to such a course, but only you had set heart and eye on pretty Mistress Marget, and less would not serve you; and what could I do but advise you to cast your city slough, and try your luck where folks find fortune?'

'Ay — ay, I remember your counsel well,' said Jenkin; 'I was to be introduced to her by you when I was perfect in my gallantries, and as rich as the king; and then she was to be surprised to find I was poor Jin Vin, that used to watch, from matin to curfew, for one glance of her eye; and now, instead of that, she has set her soul on this Scottish sparrow-hawk of a lord that won my last tester, and be cursed to him; and so I am bankrupt in love, fortune, and character, before I am out of my time, and all along of you, Mother Midnight.'

'Do not call me out of my own name, my dear boy, Jin Vin,' answered Ursula, in a tone betwixt rage and coaxing — 'do not; because I am no saint, but a poor sinful woman, with no more patience than she needs to carry her through a thousand crosses. And if I have done you wrong by evil counsel, I must mend it, and put you right by good advice. And for the score of pieces that must be made up at settling-day, why, here is, in a good green purse, as much as will make that matter good; and we will get old Crosspatch, the tailor, to take a long day for your clothes; and —'

'Mother, are you serious?' said Jin Vin, unable to trust either his eyes or his ears.

'In troth am I,' said the dame; 'and will you call me Mother Midnight now, Jin Vin?'

'Mother Midnight!' exclaimed Jenkin, hugging the dame in his transport, and bestowing on her still comely cheek a hearty and not unacceptable smack, that sounded like the report of a pistol — 'Mother Midday, rather, that has risen to light me out of my troubles — a mother more dear than she who bore me; for she, poor soul, only brought me into a world of sin and sorrow, and your timely aid has helped me out of the one and the other.' And the good-natured fellow threw himself back in his chair, and fairly drew his hand across his eyes.

'You would not have me be made to ride the Skimmington then,' said the dame; 'or parade me in a cart, with all the brass basins of the ward beating the march to Bridewell before me?'

'I would sooner be carted to Tyburn myself,' replied the penitent.

'Why, then, sit up like a man and wipe thine eyes; and, if thou art pleased with what I have done, I will show thee how thou mayst requite me in the highest degree.'

'How?' said Jenkin Vincent, sitting straight up in his chair. 'You would have me, then, do you some service for this friendship of yours?'

'Ay, marry, would I,' said Dame Ursley; 'for you are to know that, though I am right glad to stead you with it, this gold is not mine, but was placed in my hands in order to find a trusty agent for a certain purpose; and so — But what's the matter with you? are you fool enough to be angry because you cannot get a purse of gold for nothing? I would I knew where such were to come by. I never could find them lying in my road, I promise you.'

'No — no, dame,' said poor Jenkin, 'it is not for that; for, look you, I would rather work these ten bones to the knuckles, and live by my labour; but —' and here he paused.

'But what, man?' said Dame Ursley. 'You are willing to work for what you want; and yet, when I offer you gold for the winning, you look on me as the devil looks over Lincoln.'

'It is ill talking of the devil, mother,' said Jenkin. 'I had him even now in my head; for, look you, I am at that pass when they say he will appear to wretched, ruined creatures and proffer them gold for the fee-simple of their salvation. But I have been trying these two days to bring my mind strongly up to the thought that I will rather sit down in shame, and sin, and sorrow, as I am like to do, than hold on in ill courses to get rid of my present straits; and so take care, Dame Ursula, how you tempt me to break such a good resolution.'

'I tempt you to nothing, young man,' answered Ursula; 'and, as I perceive you are too wilful to be wise, I will e'en put my purse in my pocket and look out for some one that will work my turn with better will and more thankfulness. And you may go your own course: break your indenture, ruin your father, lose your character, and bid pretty Mistress Margaret farewell forever and a day.'

'Stay — stay,' said Jenkin; 'the woman is in as great a hurry as a brown baker when his oven is overheated. First, let me hear that which you have to propose to me.'

'Why, after all, it is but to get a gentleman of rank and fortune, who is in trouble, carried in secret down the river as far as the Isle of Dogs, or somewhere thereabout, where he may lie concealed until he can escape abroad. I know thou knowest every place by the river's side as well as the devil knows an usurer or the beggar knows his dish.'

'A plague of your similes, dame,' replied the apprentice; 'for the devil gave me that knowledge, and beggary may be the end on't. But what has this gentleman done, that he should need to be under hiding? No Papist, I hope — no Catesby and Piercy business — no Gunpowder Plot?'

'Fie — fie! what do you take me for?' said Dame

Ursula. 'I am as good a churchwoman as the parson's wife, save that necessary business will not allow me to go there oftener than on Christmas Day, Heaven help me! No — no, this is no Popish matter. The gentleman hath but struck another in the Park —'

'Ha! what?' said Vincent, interrupting her with a start.

'Ay — ay, I see you guess whom I mean. It is even he we have spoken of so often — just Lord Glenvarloch, and no one else.'

Vincent sprung from his seat, and traversed the room with rapid and disorderly steps.

'There — there it is now: you are always ice or gunpowder. You sit in the great leathern arm-chair as quiet as a rocket hangs upon the frame in a rejoicing-night till the match be fired, and then, whizz! you are in the third heaven, beyond the reach of the human voice, eye, or brain. When you have wearied yourself with padding to and fro across the room, will you tell me your determination, for time presses? Will you aid me in this matter or not?'

'No — no — no — a thousand times no,' replied Jenkin. 'Have you not confessed to me that Margaret loves him?'

'Ay,' answered the dame, 'that she thinks she does; but that will not last long.'

'And have I not told you but this instant,' replied Jenkin, 'that it was this same Glenvarloch that rooked me, at the ordinary, of every penny I had, and made a knave of me to boot, by gaining more than was my own? O that cursed gold, which Shortyard, the mercer, paid me that morning on accompt, for mending the clock of

St. Stephen's! If I had not, by ill chance, had that about me, I could but have beggared my purse, without blemishing my honesty; and, after I had been rooked of all the rest amongst them, I must needs risk the last five pieces with that shark among the minnows!'

'Granted,' said Dame Ursula. 'All this I know; and I own that, as Lord Glenvarloch was the last you played with, you have a right to charge your ruin on his head. Moreover, I admit, as already said, that Margaret has made him your rival. Yet surely, now he is in danger to lose his hand, it is not a time to remember all this?'

'By my faith, but it is, though,' said the young citizen. 'Lose his hand, indeed! They may take his head, for what I care. Head and hand have made me a miserable wretch!'

'Now, were it not better, my prince of flap-caps,' said Dame Ursula, 'that matters were squared between you; and that, through means of the same Scottish lord, who has, as you say, deprived you of your money and your mistress, you should in a short time recover both?'

'And how can your wisdom come to that conclusion, dame?' said the apprentice. 'My money, indeed, I can conceive — that is, if I comply with your proposal — but my pretty Margaret! how serving this lord, whom she has set her nonsensical head upon, can do me good with her is far beyond my conception.'

'That is because, in simple phrase,' said Dame Ursula, 'thou knowest no more of a woman's heart than doth a Norfolk gosling. Look you, man. Were I to report to Mistress Marget that the young lord has miscarried through thy lack of courtesy in refusing to help him, why, then, thou wert odious to her for ever. She will loathe thee as she will loathe the very cook who is to strike off Glenvarloch's hand with his cleaver; and then she will be yet more fixed in her affections towards this lord. London will hear of nothing but him — speak of nothing but him — think of nothing but him, for three weeks at least, and all that outcry will serve to keep him uppermost in her mind; for nothing pleases a girl so much as to bear relation to any one who is the talk of the whole world around her. Then, if he suffer this sentence of the law, it is a chance if she ever forgets him. I saw that handsome, proper young gentleman, Babington, suffer in the Queen's time myself, and though I was then but a girl, he was in my head for a year after he was hanged. But, above all, pardoned or punished, Glenvarloch will probably remain in London, and his presence will keep up the silly girl's nonsensical fancy about him. Whereas, if he escapes —'

'Ay, show me how that is to avail me?' said Jenkin.

'If he escapes,' said the dame, resuming her argument, 'he must resign the court for years, if not for life; and you know the old saying, "Out of sight, and out of mind."'

'True — most true,' said Jenkin; 'spoken like an oracle, most wise Ursula.'

'Ay — ay, I knew you would hear reason at last,' said the wily dame; 'and then, when this same lord is off and away for once and for ever, who, I pray you, is to be pretty pet's confidential person, and who is to fill up the void in her affections? Why, who but thou, thou pearl of 'prentices! And then you will have overcome your own inclinations to comply with hers, and every woman is sensible of that; and you will have run some risk, too, in carrying her desires into effect, and what is it that woman likes better than bravery and devotion to her will? Then you have her secret, and she must treat you with favour and observance, and repose confidence in you, and hold private intercourse with you, till she weeps with one eye for the absent lover whom she is never to see again, and blinks with the other blythely upon him who is in presence; and then if you know not how to improve the relation in which you stand with her, you are not the brisk lively lad that all the world takes you for. Said I well?'

'You have spoken like an empress, most mighty Ursula,' said Jenkin Vincent; 'and your will shall be obeyed.'

'You know Alsatia well?' continued his tutoress.

'Well enough — well enough,' replied he with a nod; 'I have heard the dice rattle there in my day, before I must set up for gentleman, and go among the gallants at the Shavaleer Bojo's, as they call him — the worse rookery of the two, though the feathers are the gayest.'

'And they will have a respect for thee yonder, I warrant?'

'Ay — ay,' replied Vin; 'when I am got into my fustian doublet again, with my bit of a trunnion under my arm, I can walk Alsatia at midnight as I could do that there Fleet Street in mid-day; they will not one of them swagger with the prince of 'prentices and the king of clubs: they know I could bring every tall boy in the ward down upon them.'

'And you know all the watermen, and so forth?'

'Can converse with every sculler in his own language, from Richmond to Gravesend, and know all the water-cocks from John Taylor, the poet, to little Grigg the Grinner, who never pulls but he shows all his teeth from ear to ear, as if he were grimacing through a horse-collar.'

'And you can take any dress or character upon you well, such as a waterman's, a butcher's, a foot-soldier's,' continued Ursula, 'or the like?'

'Not such a mummer as I am within the walls, and thou knowest that well enough, dame,' replied the apprentice. 'I can touch the players themselves at the Ball and at the Fortune for presenting anything except a gentleman. Take but this d—d skin of frippery off me, which I think the devil stuck me into, and you shall put me into nothing else that I will not become as if I were born to it.'

'Well, we will talk of your transmutation by and by,' said the dame, 'and find you clothes withal, and money besides; for it will take a good deal to carry the thing handsomely through.'

'But where is that money to come from, dame?' said Jenkin; 'there is a question I would fain have answered before I touch it.'

'Why, what a fool art thou to ask such a question! Suppose I am content to advance it to please young madam, what is the harm then?'

'I will suppose no such thing,' said Jenkin, hastily; 'I know that you, dame, have no gold to spare, and maybe would not spare it if you had; so that cock will not crow. It must be from Margaret herself.'

'Well, thou suspicious animal, and what if it were?' said Ursula.

'Only this,' replied Jenkin, 'that I will presently to her, and learn if she has come fairly by so much ready money; for sooner than connive at her getting it by any indirection, I would hang myself at once. It is enough what I have done myself, no need to engage poor Margaret in such villainy. I'll to her, and tell her of the danger — I will, by Heaven!'

'You are mad to think of it,' said Dame Suddlechop, considerably alarmed; 'hear me but a moment. I know not precisely from whom she got the money; but sure I am that she obtained it at her godfather's.'

'Why, Master George Heriot is not returned from France,' said Jenkin.

'No,' replied Ursula, 'but Dame Judith is at home; and the strange lady, whom they call Master Heriot's ghost — she never goes abroad.'

'It is very true, Dame Suddlechop,' said Jenkin; 'and I believe you have guessed right: they say that lady has coin at will; and if Marget can get a handful of fairy gold, why, she is free to throw it away at will.'

'Ah, Jin Vin,' said the dame, reducing her voice almost to a whisper, 'we should not want gold at will neither, could we but read the riddle of that lady!'

'They may read it that list,' said Jenkin; 'I'll never pry into what concerns me not. Master George Heriot is a worthy and brave citizen, and an honour to London, and has a right to manage his own household as he likes best. There was once a talk of rabbling him the fifth of November before the last, because they said he kept a nunnery in his house, like old Lady Foljambe; but Master George is well loved among the 'prentices, and we got so many brisk boys of us together as should have rabbled the rabble had they had but the heart to rise.'

'Well, let that pass,' said Ursula; 'and now tell me how you will manage to be absent from shop a day or two, for you must think that this matter will not be ended sooner.'

'Why, as to that, I can say nothing,' said Jenkin, 'I have always served duly and truly; I have no heart to play truant, and cheat my master of his time as well as his money.'

'Nay, but the point is to get back his money for him,' said Ursula, 'which he is not likely to see on other conditions. Could you not ask leave to go down to your uncle in Essex for two or three days? He may be ill, you know.'

'Why, if I must, I must,' said Jenkin, with a heavy sigh; 'but I will not be lightly caught treading these dark and crooked paths again.'

'Hush thee, then,' said the dame, 'and get leave for this very evening; and come back hither, and I will introduce you to another implement who must be employed in the matter. Stay, stay! the lad is mazed; you would not go into your master's shop in that guise, surely? Your trunk is in the matted chamber with your 'prentice things; go and put them on as fast as you can.'

'I think I am bewitched,' said Jenkin, giving a glance towards his dress, 'or that these fool's trappings have made as great an ass of me as of many I have seen wear them; but let me once be rid of the harness, and if you catch me putting it on again, I will give you leave to sell me to a gipsy to carry pots, pans, and beggar's bantlings all the rest of my life.'

So saying, he retired to change his apparel.

CHAPTER XXII

Chance will not do the work. Chance sends the breeze;
But if the pilot slumber at the helm,
The very wind that wafts us towards the port
May dash us on the shelves. The steersman's part is vigilance,
Blow it or rough or smooth.

Old Play.

We left Nigel, whose fortunes we are bound to trace by the engagement contracted in our title-page, sad and solitary in the mansion of Trapbois, the usurer, having just received a letter instead of a visit from his friend the Templar, stating reasons why he could not at that time come to see him in Alsatia. So that it appeared his intercourse with the better and more respectable class of society was, for the present, entirely cut off. This was a melancholy, and, to a proud mind like that of Nigel, a degrading, reflection.

He went to the window of his apartment, and found the street enveloped in one of those thick, dingy, yellow-coloured fogs which often invest the lower part of London and Westminster. Amid the darkness, dense and palpable, were seen to wander like phantoms a reveller or two, whom the morning had surprised where the evening left them; and now, with tottering steps, and by an instinct which intoxication could not wholly overcome, were groping the way to their own homes, to convert day into night, for the purpose of sleeping off the debauch which had turned night into day. Although it was broad day in the other parts of the city, it was scarce dawn yet in Alsatia; and none of the sounds of industry or occupation were there heard which had long before aroused the slumberers in every other quarter. The prospect was too tiresome and disagreeable to detain Lord Glenvarloch at his station, so, turning from the window, he examined with more interest the furniture and appearance of the apartment which he tenanted.

Much of it had been in its time rich and curious. There was a huge four-post bed, with as much carved oak about it as would have made the head of a man-of-war, and tapestry hangings ample enough to have been her sails. There was a huge mirror with a massy frame of gilt brass-work, which was of Venetian manufacture, and must have been worth a considerable sum before it received the tremendous crack which, traversing it from one corner to the other, bore the same proportion to the surface that the Nile bears to the map of Egypt. The chairs were of different forms and shapes: some had been carved, some gilded, some covered with damasked leather, some with embroidered work, but all were damaged and worm-eaten. There was a picture of Susanna and the Elders, over the chimney-piece, which might have been accounted a choice piece, had not the rats made free with the chaste fair one's nose, and with the beard of one of her reverend admirers.

In a word, all that Lord Glenvarloch saw seemed to have been articles carried off by appraisement or distress, or bought as pennyworths at some obscure broker's, and huddled together in the apartment, as in a sale-room, without regard to taste or congruity.

The place appeared to Nigel to resemble the houses near the sea-coast, which are too often furnished with the spoils of wrecked vessels, as this was probably fitted up with the relics of ruined profligates. 'My own skiff is among the breakers,' thought Lord Glenvarloch, 'though my wreck will add little to the profits of the spoiler.'

He was chiefly interested in the state of the grate — a huge assemblage of rusted iron bars which stood in the chimney, unequally supported by three brazen feet, moulded into the form of lion's claws, while the fourth, which had been bent by an accident, seemed proudly uplifted as if to paw the ground; or as if the whole article had nourished the ambitious purpose of pacing forth into the middle of the apartment, and had one foot ready raised for the journey. A smile passed over Nigel's face as this fantastic idea presented itself to his fancy. 'I must stop its march, however,' he thought; 'for this morning is chill and raw enough to demand some fire.'

He called accordingly from the top of a large staircase, with a heavy oaken balustrade, which gave access to his own and other apartments, for the house was old and of considerable size; but, receiving no answer to his repeated summons, he was compelled to go in search of some one who might accommodate him with what he wanted.

Nigel had, according to the fashion of the old world in Scotland, received an education which might, in most particulars, be termed simple, hardy, and unostentatious; but he had, nevertheless, been accustomed to much personal deference, and to the constant attendance and ministry of one or more domestics. This was the universal custom in Scotland, where wages were next to nothing, and where, indeed, a man of title or influence might have as many attendants as he pleased for the mere expense of food, clothes, and countenance. Nigel was therefore mortified and displeased when he found himself without notice or attendance; and the more dissatisfied, because he was at the same time angry with himself for suffering such a trifle to trouble him at all amongst matters of more deep concernment. 'There must be surely some servants in so large a house as this,' said he, as he wandered over the place, through which he was conducted by a passage which branched off from the gallery. As he went on, he tried the entrance to several apartments, some of which he found were locked and others unfurnished, all apparently unoccupied; so that at length he returned to the staircase, and resolved to make his way down to the lower part of the house, where he supposed he must at least find the old gentleman and his ill-favoured daughter. With this purpose, he first made his entrance into a little low, dark parlour, containing a well-worn leathern easy-chair, before which stood a pair of slippers, while on the left side rested a crutch-handled staff; an oaken table stood before it, and supported a huge desk clamped with iron, and a massive pewter inkstand. Around the apartment were shelves, cabinets, and other places convenient for depositing papers. A sword, musketoon, and a pair of pistols hung over the chimney, in ostentatious display, as if to intimate that the proprietor would be prompt in the defence of his premises.

'This must be the usurer's den,' thought Nigel; and he was about to call aloud, when the old man, awakened even by the slightest noise, for avarice seldom sleeps sound, soon was heard from the inner room, speaking in a voice of irritability, rendered more tremulous by his morning cough.

'Ugh, ugh, ugh — who is there? I say — ugh, ugh — who is there? Why, Martha! — ugh, ugh — Martha Trapbois — here be thieves in the house, and they will not speak to me — why, Martha! — thieves, thieves — ugh, ugh, ugh!'

Nigel endeavoured to explain, but the idea of thieves had taken possession of the old man's pineal gland, and he kept coughing and screaming, and screaming and coughing, until the gracious Martha entered the apartment; and, having first outscreamed her father, in order to convince him that there was no danger, and to assure him that the intruder was their new lodger, and having as often heard her sire ejaculate — 'Hold him fast — ugh, ugh — hold him fast till I come,' she at length succeeded in silencing his fears and his clamour, and then coldly and drily asked Lord Glenvarloch what he wanted in her father's apartment.

Her lodger had, in the mean time, leisure to contemplate her appearance, which did not by any means improve the idea he had formed of it by candlelight on the preceding evening. She was dressed in what was called a Queen Mary's ruff and farthingale; not the falling ruff with which the unfortunate Mary of Scotland is usually painted, but that which, with more than Spanish stiffness, surrounded the throat, and set off the morose head, of her fierce namesake of Smithfield memory. This antiquated dress assorted well with the faded complexion, grey eyes, thin lips, and austere visage of the antiquated maiden, which was, moreover, enhanced by a black hood, worn as her head-gear, carefully disposed so as to prevent any of her hair from escaping to view, probably because the simplicity of the period knew no art of disguising the colour with which time had begun to grizzle her tresses. Her figure was tall, thin, and flat, with skinny arms and hands, and feet of the larger size, cased in huge high-heeled shoes, which added height to a stature already ungainly. Apparently some art had been used by the tailor to conceal a slight defect of shape, occasioned by the accidental elevation of one shoulder above the other; but the praiseworthy efforts of the ingenious mechanic succeeded in calling the attention of the observer to his benevolent purpose without demonstrating that he had been able to achieve it.

Such was Mrs. Martha Trapbois, whose dry 'What were you seeking here, sir?' fell again, and with reiterated sharpness, on the ear of Nigel, as he gazed upon her presence, and compared it internally to one of the faded and grim figures in the old tapestry which adorned his bedstead. It was, however, necessary to reply, and he answered, that 'He came in search of the servants, as he desired to have a fire kindled in his apartment on account of the rawness of the morning.'

'The woman who does our char-work,' answered Mistress Martha, 'comes at eight o'clock; if you want fire sooner, there are fagots and a bucket of sea-coal in the stone-closet at the head of the stair, and there is a flint and steel on the upper shelf; you can light fire for yourself if you will.'

'No — no — no, Martha,' ejaculated her father, who, having donned his rusty tunic, with his hose all ungirt, and his feet slip-shod, hastily came out of the inner apartment, with his mind probably full of robbers, for he had a naked rapier in his hand, which still looked formidable, though rust had somewhat marred its shine. What he had heard at entrance about lighting a fire had changed, however, the current of his ideas. 'No — no — no,' he cried, and each negative was more emphatic than its predecessor. 'The gentleman shall not have the trouble to put on a fire — ugh — ugh. I'll put it on myself for a con-si-de-ra-ti-on.'

This last word was a favourite expression with the old gentleman, which he pronounced in a peculiar manner, gasping it out syllable by syllable, and laying a strong emphasis upon the last. It was, indeed, a sort of protecting clause, by which he guarded himself against all inconveniences attendant on the rash habit of offering service or civility of any kind, the which, when hastily snapped at by those to whom they are uttered, give the profferer sometimes room to repent his promptitude.

'For shame, father,' said Martha, 'that must not be. Master Grahame will kindle his own fire, or wait till the charwoman comes to do it for him, just as likes him best.'

''No, child — no, child. Child Martha, no,' reiterated the old miser; 'no charwoman shall ever touch a grate in my house; they put — ugh, ugh — the fagot uppermost, and so the coal kindles not, and the flame goes up the chimney, and wood and heat are both thrown away. Now, I will lay it properly for the gentleman, for a consideration, so that it shall last — ugh, ugh — last the whole day.' Here his vehemence increased his cough so violently, that Nigel could only, from a scattered word here and there, comprehend that it was a recommendation to his daughter to remove the poker and tongs from the stranger's fireside, with an assurance that, when necessary, his landlord would be in attendance to adjust it himself, 'for a consideration.'

Martha paid as little attention to the old man's injunctions as a predominant dame gives to those of a henpecked husband. She only repeated, in a deeper and more emphatic tone of censure — 'For shame, father — for shame!' then, turning to her guest, said, with her usual ungraciousness of manner — 'Master Grahame, it is best to be plain with you at first. My father is an old, a very old man, and his wits, as you may see, are somewhat weakened — though I would not advise you to make a bargain with him, else you may find them too sharp for your own. For myself, I am a lone woman, and, to say truth, care little to see or converse with any one. If you can be satisfied with house-room, shelter, and safety, it will be your own fault if you have them not, and they are not always to be found in this unhappy quarter. But, if you seek deferential observance and attendance, I tell you at once you will not find them here.'

'I am not wont either to thrust myself upon acquaintance, madam, or to give trouble,' said the guest; 'nevertheless, I shall need the assistance of a domestic to assist me to dress. Perhaps you can recommend me to such?'

'Yes, to twenty,' answered Mistress Martha, 'who will pick your purse while they tie your points, and cut your throat while they smooth your pillow.'

'I will be his servant myself,' said the old man, whose intellect, for a moment distanced, had again, in some measure, got up with the conversation. 'I will brush his cloak — ugh, ugh — and tie his points — ugh, ugh — and clean his shoes — ugh — and run on his errands with speed and safety — ugh, ugh, ugh, ugh — for a consideration.'

'Good-morrow to you, sir,' said Martha to Nigel, in a tone of direct and positive dismissal. 'It cannot be agreeable to a daughter that a stranger should hear her father speak thus. If you be really a gentleman, you will retire to your own apartment.'

'I will not delay a moment,' said Nigel, respectfully, for he was sensible that circumstances palliated the woman's rudeness. 'I would but ask you, if seriously there can be danger in procuring the assistance of a serving-man in this place?'

'Young gentleman,' said Martha, 'you must know little of Whitefriars to ask the question. We live alone in this house, and seldom has a stranger entered it; nor should you, to be plain, had my will been consulted. Look at the door: see if that of a castle can be better secured; the windows of the first floor are grated on the outside, and within, look to these shutters.'

She pulled one of them aside, and showed a ponderous apparatus of bolts and chains for securing the window-shutters, while her father, pressing to her side, seized her gown with a trembling hand, and said in a low whisper, 'Show not the trick of locking and undoing them. Show him not the trick on 't, Martha — ugh, ugh — on *no* consideration.'

Martha went on, without paying him any attention — 'And yet, young gentleman, we have been more than once like to find all these defences too weak to protect our lives; such an evil effect on the wicked generation around us hath been made by the unhappy report of my poor father's wealth.'

'Say nothing of that, housewife,' said the miser, his irritability increased by the very supposition of his being wealthy — 'say nothing of that, or I will beat thee, housewife — beat thee with my staff, for fetching and carrying lies that will procure our throats to be cut at last — ugh, ugh. I am but a poor man,' he continued, turning to Nigel — 'a very poor man, that am willing to do any honest turn upon earth for a modest consideration.'

'I therefore warn you of the life you must lead, young gentleman,' said Martha; 'the poor woman who does the char-work will assist you so far as is in her power, but the wise man is his own best servant and assistant.'

'It is a lesson you have taught me, madam, and I thank you for it; I will assuredly study it at leisure.'

'You will do well,' said Martha; 'and as you seem thankful for advice, I, though I am no professed counsellor of others, will give you more. Make no intimacy with any one in Whitefriars; borrow no money, on any score, especially from my father, for, dotard as he seems, he will make an ass of you. Last, and best of all, stay here not an instant longer than you can help it. Farewell, sir.'

'A gnarled tree may bear good fruit, and a harsh nature may give good counsel,' thought the Lord of Glenvarloch, as he retreated to his own apartment, where the same reflection occurred to him again and again, while, unable as yet to reconcile himself to the thoughts of becoming his own fire-maker, he walked up and down his bedroom, to warm himself by exercise.

At length his meditations arranged themselves in the following soliloquy — by which expression I beg leave to observe, once for all, that I do not mean that Nigel literally said aloud with his bodily organs the words which follow in inverted commas, while pacing the room by himself, but that I myself choose to present to my dearest reader the picture of my hero's mind, his reflections and resolutions, in the form of a speech rather than in that of a narrative. In other words, I have put his thoughts into language; and this I conceive to be the purpose of the soliloquy upon the stage as well as in the closet, being at once the most natural, and perhaps the only, way of communicating to the spectator what is supposed to be passing in the bosom of the scenic personage. There are no such soliloquies in nature, it is true, but unless they were received as a conventional medium of communication betwixt the poet and the audience, we should reduce dramatic authors to the recipe of Master Puff, who makes Lord Burleigh intimate a long train of political reasoning to the audience by one comprehensive shake of his noddle. In narrative, no doubt, the writer has the alternative of telling that his personages thought so and so, inferred thus and thus, and arrived at such and such a conclusion; but the soliloquy is a more concise and spirited mode of communicating the same information; and therefore thus communed, or thus might have communed, the Lord of Glenvarloch with his own mind: —

'She is right, and has taught me a lesson I will profit by. I have been, through my whole life, one who leant upon others for that assistance which it is more truly noble to derive from my own exertions. I am ashamed of feeling the paltry inconvenience which long habit had led me to annex to the want of a servant's assistance — I am ashamed of that; but far, far more am I ashamed to have suffered the same habit of throwing my own burden on others, to render me, since I came to this city, a mere victim of those events which I have never even attempted to influence — a thing never acting, but perpetually acted upon — protected by one friend, deceived by another; but in the advantage which I received from the one, and the evil I have sustained from the other, as passive and helpless as a boat that drifts without oar or rudder at the mercy of the winds and waves. I became a courtier, because Heriot so advised it; a gamester, because Dalgarno so contrived it; an Alsatian, because Lowestoffe so willed it. Whatever of good or bad has befallen me hath arisen out of the agency of others, not from my own. My father's son must no longer hold this facile and puerile course. Live or die, sink or swim, Nigel Olifaunt, from this moment, shall owe his safety, success, and honour to his own exertions, or shall fall with the credit of having at least exerted his own free agency. I will write it down in my tablets, in her very words — "The wise man is his own best assistant."'

He had just put his tablets in his pocket, when the old charwoman, who, to add to her efficiency, was sadly crippled by rheumatism, hobbled into the room, to try if she could gain a small gratification by waiting on the stranger. She readily undertook to get Lord Glenvarloch's breakfast, and, as there was an eating-house at the next door, she succeeded in a shorter time than Nigel had augured.

As his solitary meal was finished, one of the Temple porters, or inferior officers, was announced, as seeking Master Grahame, on the part of his friend, Master Lowestoffe; and being admitted by the old woman to his apartment, he delivered to Nigel a small mail-trunk, with the clothes he had desired should be sent to him, and then, with more mystery, put into his hand a casket, or strong-box, which he carefully concealed beneath his cloak. 'I am glad to be rid on 't,' said the fellow, as he placed it on the table.

'Why, it is surely not so very heavy,' answered Nigel, 'and you are a stout young man.'

'Ay, sir,' replied the fellow; 'but Samson himself would not have carried such a matter safely through Alsatia, had the lads of the huff known what it was. Please to look into it, sir, and see all is right. I am a honest fellow, and it comes safe out of my hands. How long it may remain so afterwards, will depend on your own care. I would not my good name were to suffer by any after-clap.'

To satisfy the scruples of the messenger, Lord Glenvarloch opened the casket in his presence, and saw that his small stock of money, with two or three valuable papers which it contained, and particularly the original sign-manual which the King had granted in his favour, were in the same order in which he had left them. At the man's further instance, he availed himself of the writing-materials which were in the casket, in order to send a line to Master Lowestoffe, declaring that his property had reached him in safety. He added some grateful acknowledgments for Lowestoffe's services, and, just as he was sealing and delivering his billet to the messenger, his aged landlord entered the apartment. His threadbare suit of black clothes was now somewhat better arranged than they had been in the dishabille of his first appearance, and his nerves and intellects seemed to be less fluttered; for without much coughing or hesitation, he invited Nigel to partake of a morning-draught of wholesome single ale, which he brought in a large leathern tankard, or black-jack, carried in the one hand, while the other stirred it round with a sprig of rosemary, to give it, as the old man said, a flavour.

Nigel declined the courteous proffer, and intimated by his manner, while he did so, that he desired no intrusion on the privacy of his own apartment; which, indeed, he was the more entitled to maintain, considering the cold reception he had that morning met with when straying from its precincts into those of his landlord. But the open casket contained matter, or rather metal, so attractive to old Trapbois, that he remained fixed, like a setting-dog at a dead point, his nose advanced, and one hand expanded like the lifted forepaw by which that sagacious quadruped sometimes indicates that it is a hare which he has in the wind. Nigel was about to break the charm which had thus arrested old Trapbois by shutting the lid of the casket, when his attention was withdrawn from him by the question of the messenger, who, holding out the letter, asked whether he was to leave it at Mr. Lowestoffe's chambers in the Temple or carry it to the Marshalsea.

'The Marshalsea!' repeated Lord Glenvarloch; 'what of the Marshalsea?'

'Why, sir,' said the man, 'the poor gentleman is laid up there in lavender, because, they say, his own kind heart led him to scald his fingers with another man's broth.'

Nigel hastily snatched back the letter, broke the seal, joined to the contents his earnest entreaty that he might be instantly acquainted with the cause of his confinement, and added that, if it arose out of his own unhappy affair, it would be of brief duration, since he had, even before hearing of a reason which so peremptorily demanded that he should surrender himself, adopted the resolution to do so, as the manliest and most proper course which his ill-fortune and imprudence had left in his own power. He therefore conjured Mr. Lowestoffe to have no delicacy upon this score, but, since his surrender was what he had determined upon as a sacrifice due to his own character, that he would have the frankness to mention in what manner it could be best arranged, so as to extricate him, Lowestoffe, from the restraint to which the writer could not but fear his friend had been subjected, on account of the generous interest which he had taken in his concerns. The letter concluded, that the writer would suffer twenty-four hours to elapse in expectation of hearing from him, and, at the end of that period, was determined to put his purpose in execution. He delivered the billet to the messenger, and, enforcing his request with a piece of money, urged him, without a moment's delay, to convey it to the hands of Master Lowestoffe.

'I — I — I — will carry it to him myself,' said the old usurer, 'for half the consideration.'

The man who heard this attempt to take his duty and perquisites over his head, lost no time in pocketing the money, and departed on his errand as fast as he could.

'Master Trapbois,' said Nigel, addressing the old man somewhat impatiently, 'had you any particular commands for me?'

'I — I — came to see if you rested well,' answered the old man; 'and — if I could do anything to serve you, on any consideration.'

'Sir, I thank you,' said Lord Glenvarloch — 'I thank you'; and, ere he could say more, a heavy footstep was heard on the stair.

'My God!' exclaimed the old man, starting up. 'Why, Dorothy — charwoman — why, daughter — draw bolt, I say, housewives — the door hath been left a-latch!'

The door of the chamber opened wide, and in strutted the portly bulk of the military hero whom Nigel had on the preceding evening in vain endeavoured to recognise.

CHAPTER XXIII

Swashbuckler. Bilboe 's the word.
Pierrot. It hath been spoke too often,
The spell hath lost its charm. I tell thee, friend,
The meanest cur that trots the street will turn,
And snarl against your proffer'd bastinado.
Swashbuckler. 'T is art shall do it, then; I will dose
the mongrels,
Or, in plain terms, I'll use the private knife
'Stead of the brandish'd falchion.

Old Play.

THE noble Captain Colepepper, or Peppercull, for he was known by both these names, and some others besides, had a martial and a swashing exterior, which, on the present occasion, was rendered yet more peculiar by a patch covering his left eye and a part of the cheek. The sleeves of his thickset velvet jerkin were polished and shone with grease; his buff gloves had huge tops, which reached almost to the elbow; his sword-belt of the same materials extended its breadth from his haunch-bone to his small ribs, and supported on the one side his large black-hilted back-sword, on the other a dagger of like proportions. He paid his compliments to Nigel with that air of predetermined effrontery which announces that it will not be repelled by any coldness of reception, asked Trapbois how he did by the familiar title of old Peter Pillory, and then seizing upon the black-jack, emptied it off at a draught to the health of the last and youngest freeman of Alsatia, the noble and loving Master Nigel Grahame.

When he had set down the empty pitcher and drawn his breath, he began to criticise the liquor which it had lately contained. 'Sufficient single beer, old Pillory, and, as I take it, brewed at the rate of a nutshell of malt to a butt of Thames — as dead as a corpse, too, and yet it went hissing down my throat — bubbling, by Jove, like water upon hot iron. You left us early, noble Master Grahame, but, good faith, we had a carouse to your honour: we heard *butt* ring hollow ere we parted; we were as loving as inkle-weavers; we fought, too, to finish off the gawdy. I bear some marks of the parson about me, you see — a note of the sermon or so, which should have been addressed to my ear, but missed its mark and reached my left eye. The man of God bears my sign-manual too; but the duke made us friends again, and it cost me more sack than I could carry, and all the Rhenish to boot, to pledge the seer in the way of love and reconciliation. But, caracco! 'tis a vile old canting slave for all that, whom I will one day beat out of his devil's livery into all the colours of the rainbow. Basta! Said I well, old Trapbois? Where is thy daughter, man? What says she to my suit? 'T is an honest one. Wilt have a soldier for thy son-in-law, old Pillory, to mingle the soul of martial honour with thy thieving, miching, petty-larceny blood. as men put bold brandy into muddy ale?'

'My daughter receives not company so early, noble captain,' said the usurer, and concluded his speech with a dry, emphatical 'ugh — ugh.'

'What, upon no con-si-de-ra-ti-on?' said the captain; 'and wherefore not, old Truepenny? she has not much time to lose in driving her bargain, methinks.'

'Captain,' said Trapbois, 'I was upon some little business with our noble friend here, Master Nigel Green — ugh, ugh, ugh —'

'And you would have me gone, I warrant you?' answered the bully; 'but patience, old Pillory, thine hour is not yet come, man. You see,' he said, pointing to the casket, 'that noble Master Grahame, whom you call Green, has got the "decuses" and the "smelts."'

'Which you would willingly rid him of — ha! ha! — ugh, ugh,' answered the usurer, 'if you knew how; but, lack-a-day! thou art one of those that come out for wool and art sure to go home shorn. Why now, but that I am sworn against laying of wagers, I would risk some consideration that this honest guest of mine sends thee home penniless, if thou darest venture with him — ugh, ugh — at any game which gentlemen play at.'

'Marry, thou hast me on the hip there, thou old miserly cony-catcher!' answered the captain, taking a bale of dice from the sleeve of his coat. 'I must always keep company with these damnable doctors, and they have made me every baby's cully, and purged my purse into an atrophy; but never mind, it passes the time as well as aught else. How say you, Master Grahame?'

The fellow paused; but even the extremity of his impudence could hardly withstand the cold look of utter contempt with which Nigel received his proposal, returning it with a simple, 'I only play where I know my company, and never in the morning.'

'Cards may be more agreeable,' said Captain Colepepper; 'and for knowing your company, here is honest old Pillory will tell you Jack Colepepper plays as truly on the square as e'er a man that trowled a die. Men talk of high and low dice, fulhams and bristles, topping, knapping, slurring, stabbing, and a hundred ways of rooking besides; but broil me like a rasher of bacon, if I could ever learn the trick on 'em!'

'You have got the vocabulary perfect, sir, at the least,' said Nigel, in the same cold tone.

'Yes, by mine honour have I,' returned the Hector; 'they are phrases that a gentleman learns about town. But perhaps you would like a set at tennis, or a game at balloon; we have an indifferent good court hard by here, and a set of as gentleman-like blades as ever banged leather against brick and mortar.'

'I beg to be excused at present,' said Lord Glenvarloch; 'and to be plain, among the valuable privileges your society has conferred on me, I hope I may reckon that of being private in my own apartment when I have a mind.'

'Your humble servant, sir,' said the captain; 'and I thank you for your civility. Jack Colepepper can have enough of company, and thrusts himself on no one. But perhaps you will like to make a match at skittles?'

'I am by no means that way disposed,' replied the young nobleman.

'Or to leap a flea—run a snail—match a wherry, eh?'

'No — I will do none of these,' answered Nigel.

Here the old man, who had been watching with his little peery eyes, pulled the bulky Hector by the skirt, and whispered, 'Do not vapour him the huff, it will not pass; let the trout play, he will rouse to the hook presently.'

But the bully, confiding in his own strength, and probably mistaking for timidity the patient scorn with which Nigel received his proposals, incited also by the open casket, began to assume a louder and more threatening tone. He drew himself up, bent his brows, assumed a look of professional ferocity, and continued, 'In Alsatia, look ye, a man must be neighbourly and companionable. Zouns! sir, we would slit any nose that was turned up at us honest fellows. Ay, sir, we would slit it up to the gristle, though it had smelt nothing all its life but musk, ambergris, and court-scented water. Rabbit me, I am a soldier, and care no more for a lord than a lamplighter!'

'Are you seeking a quarrel, sir?' said Nigel, calmly, having in truth no desire to engage himself in a discreditable broil in such a place, and with such a character.

'Quarrel, sir!' said the captain; 'I am not seeking a quarrel, though I care not how soon I find one. Only I wish you to understand you must be neighbourly, that's all. What if we should go over the water to the garden, and see a bull hanked this fine morning — 'sdeath, will you do nothing?'

'Something I am strangely tempted to do at this moment,' said Nigel.

'Videlicet,' said Colepepper, with a swaggering air, 'let us hear the temptation.'

'I am tempted to throw you headlong from the window, unless you presently make the best of your way downstairs.'

'Throw me from the window! — hell and furies!' exclaimed the captain. 'I have confronted twenty crooked sabres at Buda with my single rapier, and shall a chitty-faced, beggarly Scots lordling speak of me and a window in the same breath? Stand off, old Pillory, let me make Scotch collops of him: he dies the death!'

'For the love of Heaven, gentlemen,' exclaimed the old miser, throwing himself between them, 'do not break the peace on any consideration! Noble guest, forbear the captain; he is a very Hector of Troy. Trusty Hector, forbear my guest; he is like to prove a very Achilles — ugh — ugh —'

Here he was interrupted by his asthma, but, nevertheless, continued to interpose his person between Colepepper, who had unsheathed his whinyard, and was making vain passes at his antagonist, and Nigel, who had stepped back to take his sword, and now held it undrawn in his left hand.

'Make an end of this foolery, you scoundrel!' said Nigel. 'Do you come hither to vent your noisy oaths and your bottled-up valour on me. You seem to know me, and I am half ashamed to say I have at length been able to recollect you; remember the garden behind the ordinary, you dastardly ruffian, and the speed with which fifty men saw you run from a drawn sword. Get you gone, sir, and do not put me to the vile labour of cudgelling such a cowardly rascal downstairs.'

The bully's countenance grew dark as night at this unexpected recognition; for he had undoubtedly thought himself secure in his change of dress and his black patch from being discovered by a person who had seen him but once. He set his teeth, clenched his hands, and it seemed as if he was seeking for a moment's courage to fly upon his antagonist. But his heart failed, he sheathed his sword, turned his back in gloomy silence, and spoke not until he reached the door, when, turning round, he said, with a deep oath, 'If I be not avenged of you for this insolence ere many days go by, I would the gallows had my body and the devil my spirit!'

So saying, and with a look where determined spite and malice made his features savagely fierce, though they could not overcome his fear, he turned and left the house. Nigel followed him as far as the gallery at the head of the staircase, with the purpose of seeing him depart, and ere he returned was met by Mistress Martha Trapbois, whom the noise of the quarrel had summoned from her own apartment. He could not resist saying to her in his natural displeasure — 'I would, madam, you could teach your father and his friends the lesson which you had the goodness to bestow on me this morning, and prevail on them to leave me the unmolested privacy of my own apartment.'

'If you came hither for quiet or retirement, young man,' answered she, 'you have been advised to an evil retreat. You might seek mercy in the Star Chamber, or holiness in hell, with better success than quiet in Alsatia. But my father shall trouble you no longer.'

So saying, she entered the apartment, and, fixing her eyes on the casket, she said with emphasis — 'If you display such a loadstone, it will draw many a steel knife to your throat.'

While Nigel hastily shut the casket, she addressed her father, upbraiding him, with small reverence, for keeping company with the cowardly, hectoring, murdering villain, John Colepepper.

'Ay — ay, child,' said the old man, with the cunning leer which intimated perfect satisfaction with his own superior address, 'I know — I know — ugh — but I'll cross-bite him. I know them all, and I can manage them; ay, ay, — I have the trick on't — ugh — ugh.'

'*You* manage, father!' said the austere damsel; 'you will manage to have your throat cut, and that ere long. You cannot hide from them your gains and your gold as formerly.'

'My gains, wench! my gold!' said the usurer; 'alack-a-day, few of these and hard got — few and hard got.'

'This will not serve you, father, any longer,' said she, 'and had not served you thus long, but that Bully Colepepper had contrived a cheaper way of plundering your house, even by means of my miserable self. But why do I speak to him of all this?' she said, checking herself, and shrugging her shoulders with an expression of pity which did not fall much short of scorn. 'He hears me not — he thinks not of me. Is it not strange that the love of gathering gold should survive the care to preserve both property and life?'

'Your father,' said Lord Glenvarloch, who could not help respecting the strong sense and feeling shown by this poor woman, even amidst all her rudeness and severity — 'your father seems to have his faculties sufficiently alert when he is in the exercise of his ordinary pursuits and functions. I wonder he is not sensible of the weight of your arguments.'

'Nature made him a man senseless of danger, and that insensibility is the best thing I have derived from him,' said she. 'Age has left him shrewdness enough to tread his old beaten paths, but not to seek new courses. The old blind horse will long continue to go its rounds in the mill, when it would stumble in the open meadow.'

'Daughter! — why, wench — why, housewife!' said the old man, awakening out of some dream, in which he had been sneering and chuckling in imagination, probably over a successful piece of roguery — 'go to chamber, wench — go to chamber — draw bolts and chain — look sharp to door — let none in or out but worshipful Master Grahame. I must take my cloak, and go to Duke Hildebrod — ay, ay, time has been, my own warrant was enough; but the lower we lie, the more are we under the wind.'

And, with his wonted chorus of muttering and coughing, the old man left the apartment. His daughter stood for a moment looking after him, with her usual expression of discontent and sorrow.

'You ought to persuade your father,' said Nigel, 'to leave this evil neighbourhood, if you are in reality apprehensive for his safety.'

'He would be safe in no other quarter,' said the daughter; 'I would rather the old man were dead than publicly dishonoured. In other quarters he would be pelted and pursued, like an owl which ventures into sunshine. Here he was safe, while his comrades could avail themselves of his talents; he is now squeezed and fleeced by them on every pretence. They consider him as a vessel on the strand, from which each may snatch a prey; and the very jealousy which they entertain respecting him as a common property may perhaps induce them to guard him from more private and daring assaults.'

'Still, methinks you ought to leave this place,' answered Nigel, 'since you might find a safe retreat in some distant country.'

'In Scotland, doubtless,' said she, looking at him with a sharp and suspicious eye, 'and enrich strangers with our rescued wealth. Ha! young man?'

'Madam, if you knew me,' said Lord Glenvarloch, 'you would spare the suspicion implied in your words.'

'Who shall assure me of that?' said Martha, sharply. 'They say you are a brawler and a gamester, and I know how far these are to be trusted by the unhappy.'

'They do me wrong, by Heaven!' said Lord Glenvarloch.

'It may be so,' said Martha; 'I am little interested in the degree of your vice or your folly; but it is plain that the one or the other has conducted you hither, and that your best hope of peace, safety, and happiness is to be gone, with the least possible delay, from a place which is always a sty for swine, and often a shambles.' So saying, she left the apartment.

There was something in the ungracious manner of this female amounting almost to contempt of him she spoke to — an indignity to which Glenvarloch, notwithstanding his poverty, had not as yet been personally exposed, and which, therefore, gave him a transitory feeling of painful surprise. Neither did the dark hints which Martha threw out concerning the danger of his place of refuge sound by any means agreeably to his ears. The bravest man, placed in a situation in which he is surrounded by suspicious persons, and removed from all counsel and assistance except those afforded by a valiant heart and a strong arm, experiences a sinking of the spirit, a consciousness of abandonment, which for a moment chills his blood and depresses his natural gallantry of disposition.

But, if sad reflections arose in Nigel's mind, he had not time to indulge them; and, if he saw little prospect of finding friends in Alsatia, he found that he was not likely to be solitary for lack of visitors.

He had scarcely paced his apartment for ten minutes, endeavouring to arrange his ideas on the course which he was to pursue on quitting Alsatia, when he was interrupted by the sovereign of the quarter, the great Duke Hildebrod himself, before whose approach the bolts and chains of the miser's dwelling fell, or withdrew, as of their own accord; and both the folding leaves of the door were opened, that he might roll himself into the house like a huge butt of liquor, a vessel to which he bore a considerable outward resemblance, both in size, shape, complexion, and contents.

'Good-morrow to your lordship,' said the greasy puncheon, cocking his single eye, and rolling it upon Nigel with a singular expression of familiar impudence; whilst his grim bull-dog, which was close at his heels, made a kind of gurgling in his throat, as if saluting, in similar fashion, a starved cat, the only living thing in Trapbois's house which we have not yet enumerated, and which had flown up to the top of the tester, where she stood clutching and grinning at the mastiff, whose greeting she accepted with as much good-will as Nigel bestowed on that of the dog's master.

'Peace, Belzie! — d—n thee, peace,' said Duke Hildebrod. 'Beasts and fools will be meddling, my lord.'

'I thought, sir,' answered Nigel, with as much haughtiness as was consistent with the cool distance which he desired to preserve — 'I thought I had told you my name at present was Nigel Grahame.'

His eminence of Whitefriars on this burst out into a loud, chuckling, impudent laugh, repeating the word till his voice was almost inarticulate, 'Niggle Green — Niggle Green — Niggle Green! Why, my lord, you would be queered in the drinking of a penny pot of

Malmsey, if you cry before you are touched. Why, you have told me the secret even now, had I not had a shrewd guess of it before. Why, Master Nigel, since that is the word, I only called you "my lord" because we made you a peer of Alsatia last night, when the sack was predominant. How you look now! Ha! ha! ha!'

Nigel, indeed, conscious that he had unnecessarily betrayed himself, replied hastily, 'He was much obliged to him for the honours conferred, but did not propose to remain in the sanctuary long enough to enjoy them.'

'Why, that may be as you will, an you will walk by wise counsel,' answered the ducal porpoise; and, although Nigel remained standing, in hopes to accelerate his guest's departure, he threw himself into one of the old tapestry-backed easy-chairs, which cracked under his weight, and began to call for old Trapbois.

The crone of all work appearing instead of her master, the duke cursed her for a careless jade, to let a strange gentleman, and a brave guest, go without his morning's draught.

'I never take one, sir,' said Glenvarloch.

'Time to begin — time to begin,' answered the duke. 'Here, you old refuse of Sathan, go to our palace and fetch Lord Green's morning-draught. Let us see — what shall it be, my lord? — a humming double pot of ale, with a roasted crab dancing in it like a wherry above bridge? or, hum — ay, young men are sweet-toothed — a quart of burnt sack, with sugar and spice? — good against the fogs. Or, what say you to sipping a gill of right distilled waters? Come, we will have them all, and you shall take your choice. Here, you Jezebel, let

Tim send the ale, and the sack, and the nipperkin of double-distilled, with a bit of diet-loaf, or some such trinket, and score it to the new-comer.'

Glenvarloch, bethinking himself that it might be as well to endure this fellow's insolence for a brief season as to get into further disagreeable quarrels, suffered him to take his own way, without interruption, only observing, 'You make yourself at home, sir, in my apartment; but, for the time, you may use your pleasure. Meanwhile, I would fain know what has procured me the honour of this unexpected visit?'

'You shall know that when old Deb has brought the liquor; I never speak of business dry-lipped. Why, how she drumbles; I warrant she stops to take a sip on the road, and then you will think you have had unchristian measure. In the mean while, look at that dog there — look Belzebub in the face, and tell me if you ever saw a sweeter beast — never flew but at head in his life.'

And, after this congenial panegyric, he was proceeding with a tale of a dog and a bull, which threatened to be somewhat of the longest, when he was interrupted by the return of the old crone, and two of his own tapsters, bearing the various kinds of drinkables which he had demanded, and which probably was the only species of interruption he would have endured with equanimity.

When the cups and cans were duly arranged upon the table, and when Deborah, whom the ducal generosity honoured with a penny farthing in the way of gratuity, had withdrawn with her satellites, the worthy potentate, having first slightly invited Lord Glenvarloch to partake of the liquor which he was to pay for, and after having observed that, excepting three poached eggs, a pint of bastard, and a cup of clary, he was fasting from everything but sin, set himself seriously to reinforce the radical moisture. Glenvarloch had seen Scottish lairds and Dutch burgomasters at their potations; but their exploits, though each might be termed a thirsty generation, were nothing to those of Duke Hildebrod, who seemed an absolute sandbed, capable of absorbing any given quantity of liquid, without being either vivified or overflowed. He drank off the ale to quench a thirst which, as he said, kept him in a fever from morning to night, and night to morning; tippled off the sack to correct the crudity of the ale; sent the spirits after the sack to keep all quiet, and then declared that, probably, he should not taste liquor till *post meridiem*, unless it was in compliment to some especial friend. Finally, he intimated he was ready to proceed on the business which brought him from home so early, a proposition which Nigel readily received, though he could not help suspecting that the most important purpose of Duke Hildebrod's visit was already transacted.

In this, however, Lord Glenvarloch proved to be mistaken. Hildebrod, before opening what he had to say, made an accurate survey of the apartment, laying, from time to time, his finger on his nose, and winking on Nigel with his single eye, while he opened and shut the doors, lifted the tapestry, which concealed, in one or two places, the dilapidation of time upon the wainscoted walls, peeped into closets, and, finally, looked under the bed, to assure himself that the coast was clear of listeners and interlopers. He then resumed his seat, and beckoned confidentially to Nigel to draw his chair close to him.

'I am well as I am, Master Hildebrod,' replied the young lord, little disposed to encourage the familiarity which the man endeavoured to fix on him; but the undismayed duke proceeded as follows: —

'You shall pardon me, my lord — and I now give you the title right seriously — if I remind you that our waters may be watched; for though old Trapbois be as deaf as St. Paul's, yet his daughter has sharp ears, and sharp eyes enough, and it is of them that it is my business to speak.'

'Say away, then, sir,' said Nigel, edging his chair somewhat closer to the quicksand, 'although I cannot conceive what business I have either with mine host or his daughter.'

'We will see that in the twinkling of a quart-pot,' answered the gracious duke; 'and first, my lord, you must not think to dance in a net before old Jack Hildebrod, that has thrice your years o'er his head, and was born, like King Richard, with all his eye-teeth ready cut.'

'Well, sir, go on,' said Nigel.

'Why, then, my lord, I presume to say that, if you are, as I believe you are, that Lord Glenvarloch whom all the world talk of — the Scotch gallant that has spent all, to a thin cloak and a light purse — be not moved, my lord, it is so noised of you — men call you the sparrow-hawk, who will fly at all — ay, were it in the very Park. Be not moved, my lord.'

'I am ashamed, sirrah,' replied Glenvarloch, 'that you should have power to move me by your insolence; but beware — and, if you indeed guess who I am, consider how long I may be able to endure your tone of insolent familiarity.'

'I crave pardon, my lord,' said Hildebrod, with a sullen yet apologetic look; 'I meant no harm in speaking my poor mind. I know not what honour there may be in being familiar with your lordship, but I judge there is little safety, for Lowestoffe is laid up in lavender only for having shown you the way into Alsatia; and so, what is to come of those who maintain you when you are here, or whether they will get most honour or most trouble by doing so, I leave with your lordship's better judgment.'

'I will bring no one into trouble on my account,' said Lord Glenvarloch. 'I will leave Whitefriars to-morrow. Nay, by Heaven, I will leave it this day.'

'You will have more wit in your anger, I trust,' said Duke Hildebrod; 'listen first to what I have to say to you, and, if honest Jack Hildebrod puts you not in the way of nicking them all, may he never cast doublets or gull a greenhorn again! And so, my lord, in plain words, you must wap and win.'

'Your words must be still plainer before I can understand them,' said Nigel.

'What the devil — a gamester, one who deals with the devil's bones and the doctors, and not understand pedlar's French! Nay, then, I must speak plain English, and that's the simpleton's tongue.'

'Speak, then, sir,' said Nigel; 'and I pray you be brief, for I have little more time to bestow on you.'

'Well, then, my lord, to be brief, as you and the lawyers call it — I understand you have an estate in the North, which changes masters for want of the redeeming ready. Ay, you start, but you cannot dance in a net before me, as I said before; and so the King runs the frown-ing humour on you, and the court vapours you the go-by, and the Prince scowls at you from under his cap, and the favourite serves you out the puckered brow and the cold shoulder, and the favourite's favourite —'

'To go no further, sir,' interrupted Nigel, 'suppose all this true, and what follows?'

'What follows?' returned Duke Hildebrod. 'Marry, this follows, that you will owe good deed, as well as good will, to him who shall put you in the way to walk with your beaver cocked in the presence, as an ye were Earl of Kildare, bully the courtiers, meet the Prince's blighting look with a bold brow, confront the favourite, baffle his deputy, and —'

'This is all well,' said Nigel; 'but how is it to be accomplished!'

'By making thee a prince of Peru, my lord of the northern latitudes — propping thine old castle with ingots — fertilising thy failing fortunes with gold dust; it shall but cost thee to put thy baron's coronet for a day or so on the brows of an old Caduca here, the man's daughter of the house, and thou art master of a mass of treasure that shall do all I have said for thee, and —'

'What, you would have me marry this old gentlewoman here, the daughter of mine host?' said Nigel, surprised and angry, yet unable to suppress some desire to laugh.

'Nay, my lord, I would have you marry fifty thousand good sterling pounds, for that, and better, hath old Trapbois hoarded; and thou shalt do a deed of mercy in it to the old man, who will lose his golden smelts in some worse way, for now that he is well-nigh past his day of work, his day of payment is like to follow.'

'Truly, this is a most courteous offer,' said Lord Glenvarloch; 'but may I pray of your candour, most noble duke, to tell me why you dispose of a ward of so much wealth on a stranger like me, who may leave you to-morrow?'

'In sooth, my lord,' said the duke, 'that question smacks more of the wit of Beaujeu's ordinary than any word I have yet heard your lordship speak, and reason it is you should be answered. Touching my peers, it is but necessary to say, that Mistress Martha Trapbois will none of them, whether clerical or laic. The captain hath asked her, so hath the parson, but she will none of them: she looks higher than either, and is, to say truth, a woman of sense, and so forth, too profound, and of spirit something too high, to put up with greasy buff or rusty prunella. For ourselves, we need but hint that we have a consort in the land of the living, and, what is more to purpose, Mrs. Martha knows it. So, as she will not lace her kersey hood save with a quality binding, you, my lord, must be the man, and must carry off fifty thousand decuses, the spoils of five thousand bullies, cutters, and spendthrifts, always deducting from the main sum some five thousand pounds for our princely advice and countenance, without which, as matters stand in Alsatia, you would find it hard to win the plate.'

'But has your wisdom considered, sir,' replied Glenvarloch, 'how this wedlock can serve me in my present emergence?'

'As for that, my lord,' said Duke Hildebrod, 'if, with forty or fifty thousand pounds in your pouch, you cannot save yourself, you will deserve to lose your head for your folly, and your hand for being close-fisted.'

'But, since your goodness has taken my matters into such serious consideration,' continued Nigel, who conceived there was no prudence in breaking with a man who, in his way, meant him favour rather than offence, 'perhaps you may be able to tell me how my kindred will be likely to receive such a bride as you recommend to me?'

'Touching that matter, my lord, I have always heard your countrymen knew as well as other folk on which side their bread was buttered. And, truly, speaking from report, I know no place where fifty thousand pounds — fifty thousand pounds, I say — will make a woman more welcome than it is likely to do in your ancient kingdom. And, truly, saving the slight twist in her shoulder, Mrs. Martha Trapbois is a person of very awful and majestic appearance, and may, for aught I know, be come of better blood than any one wots of; for old Trapbois looks not over like to be her father, and her mother was a generous, liberal sort of a woman.'

'I am afraid,' answered Nigel, 'that chance is rather too vague to assure her a gracious reception into an honourable house.'

'Why, then, my lord,' replied Hildebrod, 'I think it like she will be even with them; for I will venture to say, she has as much ill-nature as will make her a match for your whole clan.'

'That may inconvenience me a little,' replied Nigel.

'Not a whit — not a whit,' said the duke, fertile in expedients; 'if she should become rather intolerable, which is not unlikely, your honourable house, which I presume to be a castle, hath, doubtless, both turrets and dungeons, and ye may bestow your bonny bride in either the one or the other, and then you know you will be out of hearing of her tongue, and she will be either above or below the contempt of your friends.'

'It is sagely counselled, most equitable sir,' replied Nigel, 'and such restraint would be a fit meed for her folly that gave me any power over her.'

'You entertain the project then, my lord?' said Duke Hildebrod.

'I must turn it in my mind for twenty-four hours,' said Nigel; 'and I will pray you so to order matters that I be not further interrupted by any visitors.'

'We will utter an edict to secure your privacy,' said the duke; 'and you do not think,' he added, lowering his voice to a confidential whisper, 'that ten thousand is too much to pay to the sovereign in name of wardship?'

'Ten thousand!' said Lord Glenvarloch; 'why, you said five thousand but now.'

'Aha! art avised of that?' said the duke, touching the side of his nose with his finger; 'nay, if you have marked me so closely, you are thinking on the case more nearly than I believed till you trapped me. Well — well, we will not quarrel about the consideration, as old Trapbois would call it; do you win and wear the dame; it will be no hard matter with your face and figure, and I will take care that no one interrupts you. I will have an edict from the senate as soon as they meet for their meridiem.'

So saying, Duke Hildebrod took his leave.

CHAPTER XXIV

This is the time. Heaven's maiden sentinel
Hath quitted her high watch, the lesser spangles
Are paling one by one; give me the ladder
And the short lever; bid Anthony
Keep with his carabine the wicket-gate;
And do thou bare thy knife and follow me,
For we will in and do it. Darkness like this
Is dawning of our fortunes.

Old Play.

When Duke Hildebrod had withdrawn, Nigel's first impulse was an irresistible feeling to laugh at the sage adviser, who would have thus connected him with age, ugliness, and ill-temper; but his next thought was pity for the unfortunate father and daughter, who, being the only persons possessed of wealth in this unhappy district, seemed like a wreck on the sea-shore of a barbarous country, only secured from plunder for the moment by the jealousy of the tribes among whom it had been cast. Neither could he help being conscious that his own residence here was upon conditions equally precarious, and that he was considered by the Alsatians in the same light of a god-send on the Cornish coast, or a sickly but wealthy caravan travelling through the wilds of Africa, and emphatically termed by the nations of despoilers through whose regions it passes *dummalafong*, which signifies a thing given to be devoured — a common prey to all men.

Nigel had already formed his own plan to extricate himself, at whatever risk, from his perilous and degrading situation; and, in order that he might carry it into instant execution, he only awaited the return of Lowestoffe's messenger. He expected him, however, in vain, and could only amuse himself by looking through such parts of his baggage as had been sent to him from his former lodgings, in order to select a small packet of the most necessary articles to take with him, in the event of his quitting his lodgings secretly and suddenly, as speed and privacy would, he foresaw, be particularly necessary, if he meant to obtain an interview with the King, which was the course his spirit and his interest alike determined him to pursue.

While he was thus engaged, he found, greatly to his satisfaction, that Master Lowestoffe had transmitted not only his rapier and poniard, but a pair of pistols, which he had used in travelling, of a smaller and more convenient size than the large petronels, or horse pistols, which were then in common use, as being made for wearing at the girdle or in the pockets. Next to having stout and friendly comrades, a man is chiefly emboldened by finding himself well armed in case of need, and Nigel, who had thought with some anxiety on the hazard of trusting his life, if attacked, to the protection of the clumsy weapon with which Lowestoffe had equipped him, in order to complete his disguise, felt an emotion of confidence approaching to triumph as, drawing his own good and well-tried rapier, he wiped it with his handkerchief, examined its point, bent it once or twice against the ground to prove its well-known metal, and finally replaced it in the scabbard, the more hastily, that he heard a tap at the door of his chamber, and had no mind to be found vapouring in the apartment with his sword drawn.

It was his old host who entered, to tell him with many cringes that the price of his apartment was to be a crown per diem; and that, according to the custom of Whitefriars, the rent was always payable per advance, although he never scrupled to let the money lie till a week or fortnight, or even a month, in the hands of any honourable guest like Master Grahame, always upon some reasonable consideration for the use. Nigel got rid of the old dotard's intrusion by throwing down two pieces of gold, and requesting the accommodation of his present apartment for eight days, adding, however, he did not think he should tarry so long.

The miser, with a sparkling eye and a trembling hand, clutched fast the proffered coin, and, having balanced the pieces with exquisite pleasure on the extremity of his withered finger, began almost instantly to show that not even the possession of gold can gratify for more than an instant the very heart that is most eager in the pursuit of it. First, the pieces might be light; with hasty hand he drew a small pair of scales from his bosom and weighed them, first together, then separately, and smiled with glee as he saw them attain the due depression in the balance — a circumstance which might add to his profits, if it were true, as was currently reported, that little of the gold coinage was current in Alsatia in a perfect state, and that none ever left the sanctuary in that condition.

Another fear then occurred to trouble the old miser's pleasure. He had been just able to comprehend that Nigel intended to leave the Friars sooner than the arrival of the term for which he had deposited the rent. This might imply an expectation of refunding, which, as a Scotch wag said, of all species of funding, jumped least with the old gentleman's humour. He was beginning to enter a hypothetical caveat on this subject, and to quote several reasons why no part of the money once consigned as room-rent could be repaid back on any pretence, without great hardship to the landlord, when Nigel, growing impatient, told him that the money was his absolutely, and without any intention on his part of resuming any of it; all he asked in return was the liberty of enjoying in private the apartment he had paid for. Old Trapbois, who had still at his tongue's end much of the smooth language by which, in his time, he had hastened the ruin of many a young spendthrift, began to launch out upon the noble and generous disposition of his new guest, until Nigel, growing impatient, took the old gentleman by the hand, and gently, yet irresistibly, leading him to the door of his chamber, put him out, but with such a decent and moderate exertion of his superior strength as to render the action in no shape indecorous, and, fastening the door, began to do that for his pistols which he had done for his favourite sword, examining with care the flints and locks, and reviewing the state of his small provision of ammunition.

In this operation he was a second time interrupted by a knocking at his door; he called upon the person to enter, having no doubt that it was Lowestoffe's messenger at length arrived. It was, however, the ungracious daughter of old Trapbois, who, muttering something about her father's mistake, laid down upon the table one of the pieces of gold which Nigel had just given to him, saying, that what she retained was the full rent for the term he had specified. Nigel replied, he had paid the money, and had no desire to receive it again.

'Do as you will with it, then,' replied his hostess, 'for there it lies, and shall lie for me. If you are fool enough to pay more than is reason, my father shall not be knave enough to take it.'

'But your father, mistress,' said Nigel — 'your father told me —'

'Oh, my father — my father,' said she, interrupting him — 'my father managed these affairs while he was able; I manage them now, and that may in the long run be as well for both of us.'

She then looked on the table, and observed the weapons.

'You have arms, I see,' she said; 'do you know how to use them?'

'I should do so, mistress,' replied Nigel, 'for it has been my occupation.'

'You are a soldier, then?' she demanded.

'No farther as yet than as every gentleman of my country is a soldier.'

'Ay, that is your point of honour — to cut the throats of the poor — a proper gentleman-like occupation for those who should protect them!'

'I do not deal in cutting throats, mistress,' replied Nigel; 'but I carry arms to defend myself, and my country if it needs me.'

'Ay,' replied Martha, 'it is fairly worded; but men say you are as prompt as others in petty brawls, where neither your safety nor your country is in hazard; and that had it not been so you would not have been in the sanctuary to-day.'

'Mistress,' returned Nigel, 'I should labour in vain to make you understand that a man's honour, which is, or should be, dearer to him than his life, may often call on and compel us to hazard our own lives, or those of others, on what would otherwise seem trifling contingencies.'

'God's law says nought of that,' said the female: 'I have only read there that "Thou shalt not kill." But I have neither time nor inclination to preach to you; you will find enough of fighting here if you like it, and well if it come not to seek you when you are least prepared. Farewell for the present; the charwoman will execute your commands for your meals.'

She left the room, just as Nigel, provoked at her assuming a superior tone of judgment and of censure, was about to be so superfluous as to enter into a dispute with an old pawnbroker's daughter on the subject of the point of honour. He smiled at himself for the folly into which the spirit of self-vindication had so nearly hurried him.

Lord Glenvarloch then applied to old Deborah, the charwoman, by whose intermediation he was provided with a tolerably decent dinner; and the only embarrassment which he experienced was from the almost forcible entry of the old dotard, his landlord, who insisted upon giving his assistance at laying the cloth. Nigel had some difficulty to prevent him from displacing his arms and some papers which were lying on the small table at which he had been sitting; and nothing short of a stern and positive injunction to the contrary could compel him to use another board, though there were two in the room, for the purpose of laying the cloth.

Having at length obliged him to relinquish his purpose, he could not help observing that the eyes of the old dotard seemed still anxiously fixed upon the small table on which lay his sword and pistols; and that, amidst all the little duties which he seemed officiously anxious to render to his guest, he took every opportunity of looking towards and approaching these objects of his attention. At length, when Trapbois thought he had completely avoided the notice of his guest, Nigel, through the observation of one of the cracked mirrors, on which channel of communication the old man had not calculated, beheld him actually extend his hand towards the table in question. He thought it unnecessary to use further ceremony, but telling his landlord, in a stern voice, that he permitted no one to touch his arms, he commanded him to leave the apartment. The old usurer commenced a maundering sort of apology, in which all that Nigel distinctly apprehended was a frequent repetition of the word 'consideration,' and which did not seem to him to require any other answer than a reiteration of his command to him to leave the apartment, upon pain of worse consequences.

The ancient Hebe who acted as Lord Glenvarloch's cupbearer took his part against the intrusion of the still more antiquated Ganymede, and insisted on old Trapbois leaving the room instantly, menacing him at the same time with her mistress's displeasure if he remained there any longer. The old man seemed more under petticoat government than any other, for the threat of the charwoman produced greater effect upon him than the more formidable displeasure of Nigel. He withdrew grumbling and muttering, and Lord Glenvarloch heard him bar a large door at the nearer end of the gallery, which served as a division betwixt the other parts of the extensive mansion and the apartment occupied by his guest, which, as the reader is aware, had its access from the landing-place at the head of the grand staircase.

Nigel accepted the careful sound of the bolts and bars, as they were severally drawn by the trembling hand of old Trapbois, as an omen that the senior did not mean again to revisit him in the course of the evening, and heartily rejoiced that he was at length to be left to uninterrupted solitude.

The old woman asked if there was aught else to be done for his accommodation; and, indeed, it had hitherto seemed as if the pleasure of serving him, or more properly the reward which she expected, had renewed her youth and activity. Nigel desired to have candles, to have a fire lighted in his apartment, and a few fagots placed beside it, that he might feed it from time to time, as he began to feel the chilly effects of the damp and low situation of the house, close as it was to the Thames. But while the old woman was absent upon his errand, he began to think in what way he should pass the long solitary evening with which he was threatened.

His own reflections promised to Nigel little amusement, and less applause. He had considered his own perilous situation in every light in which it could be viewed, and foresaw as little utility as comfort in resuming the survey. To divert the current of his ideas, books were, of course, the readiest resource; and although, like most of us, Nigel had, in his time, sauntered through large libraries, and even spent a long time there without greatly disturbing their learned contents, he was now in a situation where the possession of a volume, even of very inferior merit, becomes a real treasure. The old housewife returned shortly afterwards with fagots, and some pieces of half-burnt wax-candles, the perquisites probably, real or usurped, of some experienced groom of the chambers, two of which she placed in large brass candlesticks, of different shapes and patterns, and laid the others on the table, that Nigel might renew them from time to time as they burnt to the socket. She heard with interest Lord Glenvarloch's request to have a book — any sort of book — to pass away the night withal, and returned for answer, that she knew of no other books in the house than her young mistress's (as she always denominated Mistress Martha Trapbois) Bible, which the owner would not lend; and her master's 'Whetstone of Witte, being the second part of Arithmetic, by Robert Record, with the Cossike Practice and Rule of Equation,' which promising volume Nigel declined to borrow. She offered, however, to bring him some books from Duke Hildebrod — 'who sometimes, good gentleman, gave a glance at a book when the state of affairs of Alsatia left him as much leisure.'

Nigel embraced the proposal, and his unwearied Iris scuttled away on this second embassy. She returned in a short time with a tattered quarto volume under her arm, and a pottle of sack in her hand; for the duke, judging that mere reading was dry work, had sent the wine by way of sauce to help it down, not forgetting to add the price to the morning's score which he had already run up against the stranger in the sanctuary.

Nigel seized on the book, and did not refuse the wine, thinking that a glass or two, as it really proved to be of good quality, would be no bad interlude to his studies.

He dismissed with thanks and assurance of reward the poor old drudge who had been so zealous in his service; trimmed his fire and candles, and placed the easiest of the old arm-chairs in a convenient posture betwixt the fire and the table at which he had dined, and which now supported the measure of sack and the lights; and thus accompanying his studies with such luxurious appliances as were in his power, he began to examine the only volume with which the ducal library of Alsatia had been able to supply him.

The contents, though of a kind generally interesting, were not well calculated to dispel the gloom by which he was surrounded. The book was entitled 'God's Revenge against Murther' — not, as the bibliomaniacal reader may easily conjecture, the work which Reynolds published under that imposing name, but one of a much earlier date, printed and sold by old Wolfe; and which, could a copy now be found, would sell for much more than its weight in gold.[1]

Nigel had soon enough of the doleful tales which the book contains, and attempted one or two other modes of killing the evening. He looked out at window, but the night was rainy, with gusts of wind; he tried to coax the fire, but the fagots were green, and smoked without burning; and as he was naturally temperate, he felt his blood somewhat heated by the canary sack which he had already drank, and had no farther inclination to that pastime. He next attempted to compose a memorial addressed to the King, in which he set forth his case and his grievances; but, speedily stung with the idea that his supplication would be treated with scorn, he flung the scroll into the fire, and, in a sort of desperation, resumed the book which he had laid aside.

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[1] See Note 2.

Nigel became more interested in the volume at the second than at the first attempt which he made to peruse it. The narratives, strange and shocking as they were to human feeling, possessed yet the interest of sorcery or of fascination, which rivets the attention by its awakening horrors. Much was told of the strange and horrible acts of blood by which men, setting nature and humanity alike at defiance, had, for the thirst of revenge, the lust of gold, or the cravings of irregular ambition, broken into the tabernacle of life. Yet more surprising and mysterious tales were recounted of the mode in which such deeds of blood had come to be discovered and revenged. Animals — irrational animals — had told the secret, and birds of the air had carried the matter. The elements had seemed to betray the deed which had polluted them: earth had ceased to support the murderer's steps, fire to warm his frozen limbs, water to refresh his parched lips, air to relieve his gasping lungs. All, in short, bore evidence to the homicide's guilt. In other circumstances, the criminal's own awakened conscience pursued and brought him to justice; and in some narratives the grave was said to have yawned, that the ghost of the sufferer might call for revenge.

It was now wearing late in the night, and the book was still in Nigel's hands, when the tapestry which hung behind him flapped against the wall, and the wind produced by its motion waved the flame of the candles by which he was reading. Nigel started and turned round, in that excited and irritated state of mind, which arose from the nature of his studies, especially at a period when a certain degree of superstition was inculcated as a point of religious faith. It was not without emotion that he saw the bloodless countenance, meagre form, and ghastly aspect of old Trapbois, once more in the very act of extending his withered hand towards the table which supported his arms. Convinced by this untimely apparition that something evil was meditated towards him, Nigel sprung up, seized his sword, drew it, and placing it at the old man's breast, demanded of him what he did in his apartment at so untimely an hour. Trapbois showed neither fear nor surprise, and only answered by some imperfect expressions, intimating he would part with his life rather than with his property; and Lord Glenvarloch, strangely embarrassed, knew not what to think of the intruder's motives, and still less how to get rid of him. As he again tried the means of intimidation, he was surprised by a second apparition from behind the tapestry in the person of the daughter of Trapbois, bearing a lamp in her hand. She also seemed to possess her father's insensibility to danger, for, coming close to Nigel, she pushed aside impetuously his naked sword, and even attempted to take it out of his hand.

'For shame,' she said, 'your sword on a man of eighty years and more! This the honour of a Scottish gentleman! Give it to me to make a spindle of.'

'Stand back,' said Nigel. 'I mean your father no injury; but I *will* know what has caused him to prowl this whole day, and even at this late hour of night, around my arms.'

'Your arms!' repeated she; 'alas! young man, the whole arms in the Tower of London are of little value to him, in comparison of this miserable piece of gold which I left this morning on the table of a young spendthrift, too careless to put what belonged to him into his own purse.'

So saying, she showed the piece of gold, which, still remaining on the table where she left it, had been the bait that attracted old Trapbois so frequently to the spot; and which, even in the silence of the night, had so dwelt on his imagination, that he had made use of a private passage long disused to enter his guest's apartment, in order to possess himself of the treasure during his slumbers. He now exclaimed, at the highest tones of his cracked and feeble voice —

'It is mine — it is mine! He gave it to me for a consideration. I will die ere I part with my property!'

'It is indeed his own, mistress,' said Nigel, 'and I do entreat you to restore it to the person on whom I have bestowed it, and let me have my apartment in quiet.'

'I will account with you for it, then,' said the maiden, reluctantly giving to her father the morsel of Mammon, on which he darted as if his bony fingers had been the talons of a hawk seizing its prey; and then making a contented muttering and mumbling, like an old dog after he has been fed, and just when he is wheeling himself thrice round for the purpose of lying down, he followed his daughter behind the tapestry, through a little sliding-door, which was perceived when the hangings were drawn apart.

'This shall be properly fastened to-morrow,' said the daughter to Nigel, speaking in such a tone that her father, deaf, and engrossed by his acquisition, could not hear her; 'to-night I will continue to watch him closely. I wish you good repose.'

These few words, pronounced in a tone of more civility than she had yet made use of towards her lodger, contained a wish which was not to be accomplished, although her guest, presently after her departure, retired to bed.

There was a slight fever in Nigel's blood, occasioned by the various events of the evening, which put him, as the phrase is, beside his rest. Perplexing and painful thoughts rolled on his mind like a troubled stream, and the more he laboured to lull himself to slumber, the further he seemed from attaining his object. He tried all the resources common in such cases: kept counting from one to a thousand, until his head was giddy; he watched the embers of the wood fire till his eyes were dazzled; he listened to the dull moaning of the wind, the swinging and creaking of signs which projected from the houses, and the baying of here and there a homeless dog, till his very ear was weary.

Suddenly, however, amid this monotony, came a sound which startled him at once. It was a female shriek. He sat up in his bed to listen, then remembered he was in Alsatia, where brawls of every sort were current among the unruly inhabitants. But another scream and another, and another, succeeded so close, that he was certain, though the noise was remote and sounded stifled, it must be in the same house with himself.

Nigel jumped up hastily, put on a part of his clothes, seized his sword and pistols, and ran to the door of his chamber. Here he plainly heard the screams redoubled, and, as he thought, the sounds came from the usurer's apartment. All access to the gallery was effectually excluded by the intermediate door, which the brave young lord shook with eager but vain impatience. But the secret passage occurred suddenly to his recollection. He hastened back to his room, and succeeded with some difficulty in lighting a candle, powerfully agitated by hearing the cries repeated, yet still more afraid lest they should sink into silence.

He rushed along the narrow and winding entrance, guided by the noise, which now burst more wildly on his ear; and, while he descended a narrow staircase which terminated the passage, he heard the stifled voices of men, encouraging, as it seemed, each other. 'D—n her, strike her down — silence her — beat her brains out!' while the voice of his hostess, though now almost exhausted, was repeating the cry of 'murder,' and 'help.' At the bottom of the staircase was a small door, which gave way before Nigel as he precipitated himself upon the scene of action, a cocked pistol in one hand, a candle in the other, and his naked sword under his arm.

Two ruffians had, with great difficulty, overpowered, or, rather, were on the point of overpowering, the daughter of Trapbois, whose resistance appeared to have been most desperate, for the floor was covered with fragments of her clothes and handfuls of her hair. It appeared that her life was about to be the price of her defence, for one villain had drawn a long clasp knife, when they were surprised by the entrance of Nigel, who, as they turned towards him, shot the fellow with the knife dead on the spot, and when the other advanced to him, hurled the candlestick at his head, and then attacked him with his sword. It was dark save some pale moonlight from the window; and the ruffian, after firing a pistol without effect, and fighting a traverse or two with his sword, lost heart, made for the window, leaped over it, and escaped. Nigel fired his remaining pistol after him at a venture, and then called for light.

'There is light in the kitchen,' answered Martha Trapbois, with more presence of mind than could have been expected. 'Stay, you know not the way; I will fetch it myself. Oh! my father — my poor father! I knew it would come to this, and all along of the accursed gold! They have MURDERED him!'

CHAPTER XXV

> Death finds us 'mid our playthings, snatches us,
> As a cross nurse might do a wayward child,
> From all our toys and baubles. His rough call
> Unlooses all our favourite ties on earth;
> And well if they are such as may be answer'd
> In yonder world, where all is judged of truly.
>
> *Old Play.*

IT was a ghastly scene which opened upon Martha Trapbois's return with a light. Her own haggard and austere features were exaggerated by all the desperation of grief, fear, and passion; but the latter was predominant. On the floor lay the body of the robber, who had expired without a groan, while his blood, flowing plentifully, had crimsoned all around. Another body lay also there, on which the unfortunate woman precipitated herself in agony, for it was that of her unhappy father. In the next moment she started up, and exclaiming — 'There may be life yet!' strove to raise the body. Nigel went to her assistance, but not without a glance at the open window; which Martha, as acute as if undisturbed either by passion or terror, failed not to interpret justly.

'Fear not,' she cried — 'fear not; they are base cowards, to whom courage is as much unknown as mercy. If I had had weapons, I could have defended myself against them without assistance or protection. Oh! my poor father! protection comes too late for this cold and stiff corpse. He is dead — dead!'

While she spoke, they were attempting to raise the dead body of the old miser; but it was evident, even from the feeling of the inactive weight and rigid joints, that life had forsaken her station. Nigel looked for a wound, but saw none. The daughter of the deceased, with more presence of mind than a daughter could at the time have been supposed capable of exerting, discovered the instrument of his murder — a sort of scarf, which had been drawn so tight round his throat as to stifle his cries for assistance in the first instance, and afterwards to extinguish life.

She undid the fatal noose; and, laying the old man's body in the arms of Lord Glenvarloch, she ran for water, for spirits, for essences, in the vain hope that life might be only suspended. That hope proved indeed vain. She chafed his temples, raised his head, loosened his night-gown, for it seemed as if he had arisen from bed upon hearing the entrance of the villains, and, finally, opened with difficulty his fixed and closely-clenched hands, from one of which dropped a key, from the other the very piece of gold about which the unhappy man had been a little before so anxious, and which probably, in the impaired state of his mental faculties, he was disposed to defend with as desperate energy as if its amount had been necessary to his actual existence.

'It is in vain — it is in vain,' said the daughter, desisting from her fruitless attempts to recall the spirit which had been effectually dislodged, for the neck had been twisted by the violence of the murderers — 'it is in vain; he is murdered. I always knew it would be thus, and now I witness it!'

She then snatched up the key and the piece of money, but it was only to dash them again on the floor, as she exclaimed, 'Accursed be ye both, for you are the causes of this deed!'

Nigel would have spoken — would have reminded her that measures should be instantly taken for the pursuit of the murderer who had escaped, as well as for her own security against his return; but she interrupted him sharply.

'Be silent,' she said — 'be silent. Think you, the thoughts of my own heart are not enough to distract me, and with such a sight as this before me? I say, be silent,' she said again, and in a yet sterner tone. 'Can a daughter listen, and her father's murdered corpse lying on her knees?'

Lord Glenvarloch, however overpowered by the energy of her grief, felt not the less the embarrassment of his own situation. He had discharged both his pistols; the robber might return; he had probably other assistants besides the man who had fallen, and it seemed to him, indeed, as if he had heard a muttering beneath the windows. He explained hastily to his companion the necessity of procuring ammunition.

'You are right,' she said somewhat contemptuously, 'and have ventured already more than ever I expected of man. Go, and shift for yourself, since that is your purpose; leave me to my fate.'

Without stopping for needless expostulation, Nigel hastened to his own room through the secret passage, furnished himself with the ammunition he sought for, and returned with the same celerity; wondering himself at the accuracy with which he achieved, in the dark, all the meanderings of the passage which he had traversed only once, and that in a moment of such violent agitation.

He found, on his return, the unfortunate woman standing like a statue by the body of her father, which she had laid straight on the floor, having covered the face with the skirt of his gown. She testified neither surprise nor pleasure at Nigel's return, but said to him calmly — 'My moan is made — my sorrow — all the sorrow at least that man shall ever have noting of — is gone past; but I will have justice, and the base villain who murdered this poor defenceless old man, when he had not, by the course of nature, a twelvemonth's life in him, shall not cumber the earth long after him. Stranger, whom Heaven has sent to forward the revenge reserved for this action, go to Hildebrod's — there they are awake all night in their revels — bid him come hither; he is bound by his duty, and dare not, and shall not, refuse his assistance, which he knows well I can reward. Why do ye tarry? — go instantly.'

'I would,' said Nigel, 'but I am fearful of leaving you alone; the villain may return, and —'

'True — most true,' answered Martha, 'he may return; and, though I care little for his murdering me, he may possess himself of what has most tempted him. Keep this key and this piece of gold — they are both of importance; defend your life if assailed, and if you kill the villain I will make you rich. I go myself to call for aid.'

Nigel would have remonstrated with her, but she had departed, and in a moment he heard the house-door clank behind her. For an instant he thought of following her; but upon recollection that the distance was but short betwixt the tavern of Hildebrod and the house of Trapbois, he concluded that she knew it better than he, incurred little danger in passing it, and that he would do well in the mean while to remain on the watch as she recommended.

It was no pleasant situation for one unused to such scenes to remain in the apartment with two dead bodies, recently those of living and breathing men, who had both, within the space of less than half an hour, suffered violent death; one of them by the hand of the assassin, the other, whose blood still continued to flow from the wound in his throat, and to flood all around him, by the spectator's own deed of violence, though of justice. He turned his face from those wretched relics of mortality with a feeling of disgust, mingled with superstition; and he found, when he had done so, that the consciousness of the presence of these ghastly objects, though unseen by him, rendered him more uncomfortable than even when he had his eyes fixed upon, and reflected by, the cold, staring, lifeless eyeballs of the deceased. Fancy also played her usual sport with him. He now thought he heard the well-worn damask nightgown of the deceased usurer rustle; anon, that he heard the slaughtered bravo draw up his leg, the boot scratching the floor as if he was about to rise; and again he deemed he heard the footsteps and the whisper of the returned ruffian under the window from which he had lately escaped. To face the last and most real danger, and to parry the terrors which the other class of feelings were like to impress upon him, Nigel went to the window, and was much cheered to observe the light of several torches illuminating the street, and followed, as the murmur of voices denoted, by a number of persons, armed, it would seem, with firelocks and halberds, and attendant on Hildebrod, who (not in his fantastic office of duke, but in that which he really possessed of bailiff of the liberty and sanctuary of Whitefriars) was on his way to inquire into the crime and its circumstances.

It was a strange and melancholy contrast to see these debauchees, disturbed in the very depth of their midnight revel, on their arrival at such a scene as this. They stared on each other, and on the bloody work before them, with lack-lustre eyes; staggered with uncertain steps over boards slippery with blood; their noisy brawling voices sunk into stammering whispers; and, with spirits quelled by what they saw, while their brains were still stupefied by the liquor which they had drunk, they seemed like men walking in their sleep.

Old Hildebrod was an exception to the general condition. That seasoned cask, however full, was at all times capable of motion, when there occurred a motive sufficiently strong to set him a-rolling. He seemed much shocked at what he beheld, and his proceedings, in consequence, had more in them of regularity and propriety than he might have been supposed capable of exhibiting upon any occasion whatever. The daughter was first examined, and stated, with wonderful accuracy and distinctness, the manner in which she had been alarmed with a noise of struggling and violence in her father's apartment, and that the more readily, because she was watching him on account of some alarm concerning his health. On her entrance, she had seen her father sinking under the strength of two men, upon whom she rushed with all the fury she was capable of. As their faces were blackened and their figures disguised, she could not pretend, in the hurry of a moment so dread-fully agitating, to distinguish either of them as persons whom she had seen before. She remembered little more except the firing of shots, until she found herself alone with her guest, and saw that the ruffian had escaped.

Lord Glenvarloch told his story as we have given it to the reader. The direct evidence thus received, Hildebrod examined the premises. He found that the villains had made their entrance by the window out of which the survivor had made his escape; yet it seemed singular that they should have done so, as it was secured with strong iron bars, which old Trapbois was in the habit of shutting with his own hand at nightfall. He minuted down with great accuracy the state of everything in the apartment, and examined carefully the features of the slain robber. He was dressed like a seaman of the lowest order, but his face was known to none present. Hildebrod next sent for an Alsatian surgeon, whose vices, undoing what his skill might have done for him, had consigned him to the wretched practice of this place. He made him examine the dead bodies, and make a proper declaration of the manner in which the sufferers seemed to have come by their end. The circumstance of the sash did not escape the learned judge, and having listened to all that could be heard or conjectured on the subject, and collected all particulars of evidence which appeared to bear on the bloody transaction, he commanded the door of the apartment to be locked until next morning; and carrying the unfortunate daughter of the murdered man into the kitchen, where there was no one in presence but Lord Glenvarloch, he asked her gravely, whether she suspected no one in particular of having committed the deed.

'Do *you* suspect no one?' answered Martha, looking fixedly on him.

'Perhaps I may, mistress; but it is my part to ask questions, yours to answer them. That's the rule of the game.'

'Then I suspect him who wore yonder sash. Do not you know whom I mean?'

'Why, if you call on me for honours, I must needs say I have seen Captain Peppercull have one of such a fashion, and he was not a man to change his suits often.'

'Send out, then,' said Martha, 'and have him apprehended.'

'If it is he, he will be far by this time; but I will communicate with the higher powers,' answered the judge.

'You would have him escape,' resumed she, fixing her eyes on him sternly.

'By cock and pie,' replied Hildebrod, 'did it depend on me, the murdering cut-throat should hang as high as ever Haman did; but let me take my time. He has friends among us, *that* you wot well; and all that should assist me are as drunk as fiddlers.'

'I will have revenge — I *will* have it,' repeated she; 'and take heed you trifle not with me.'

'Trifle! I would sooner trifle with a she-bear the minute after they had baited her. I tell you, mistress, be but patient, and we will have him. I know all his haunts, and he cannot forbear them long; and I will have trapdoors open for him. You cannot want justice, mistress, for you have the means to get it.'

'They who help me in my revenge,' said Martha, 'shall share those means.'

'Enough said,' replied Hildebrod, 'and now I would have you go to my house and get something hot: you will be but dreary here by yourself.'

'I will send for the old charwoman,' replied Martha, 'and we have the stranger gentleman, besides.'

'Umph — umph, the stranger gentleman!' said Hildebrod to Nigel, whom he drew a little apart. 'I fancy the captain has made the stranger gentleman's fortune when he was making a bold dash for his own. I can tell your honour — I must not say lordship — that I think my having chanced to give the greasy buff-and-iron scoundrel some hint of what I recommended to you to-day has put him on this rough game. The better for you: you will get the cash without the father-in-law. You will keep conditions, I trust?'

'I wish you had said nothing to any one of a scheme so absurd,' said Nigel.

'Absurd! Why, think you she will not have thee? Take her with the tear in her eye, man — take her with the tear in her eye. Let me hear from you to-morrow. Good-night, good-night; a nod is as good as a wink. I must to my business of sealing and locking up. By the way, this horrid work has put all out of my head. Here is a fellow from Mr. Lowestoffe has been asking to see you. As he said his business was express, the senate only made him drink a couple of flagons, and he was just coming to beat up your quarters when this breeze blew up. Ahey, friend! there is Master Nigel Grahame.'

A young man, dressed in a green plush jerkin, with a badge on the sleeve, and having the appearance of a waterman, approached and took Nigel aside, while Duke Hildebrod went from place to place to exercise his authority, and to see the windows fastened and the doors of the apartment locked up. The news communicated by Lowestoffe's messenger were not the most pleasant. They were intimated in a courteous whisper to Nigel, to the following effect: — That Master Lowestoffe prayed him to consult his safety by instantly leaving Whitefriars, for that a warrant from the Lord Chief Justice had been issued out for apprehending him, and would be put in force to-morrow, by the assistance of a party of musketeers, a force which the Alsatians neither would nor dared to resist.

'And so, squire,' said the aquatic emissary, 'my wherry is to wait you at the Temple Stairs yonder, at five this morning, and, if you would give the bloodhounds the slip, why, you may.'

'Why did not Master Lowestoffe write to me?' said Nigel.

'Alas! the good gentleman lies up in lavender for it himself, and has as little to do with pen and ink as if he were a parson.'

'Did he send any token to me?' said Nigel.

'Token! ay, marry did he — token enough, an I have not forgot it,' said the fellow; then, giving a hoist to the waistband of his breeches, he said, 'Ay, I have it: you were to believe me, because your name was written with an O for Grahame. Ay, that was it, I think. Well, shall we meet in two hours, when tide turns, and go down the river like a twelve-oared barge?'

'Where is the King just now, knowest thou?' answered Lord Glenvarloch.

'The King! why, he went down to Greenwich yesterday by water, like a noble sovereign as he is, who will always float where he can. He was to have hunted this week, but that purpose is broken, they say; and the Prince, and the Duke, and all of them at Greenwich, are as merry as minnows.'

'Well,' replied Nigel, 'I will be ready to go at five; do thou come hither to carry my baggage.'

'Ay — ay, master,' replied the fellow, and left the house, mixing himself with the disorderly attendants of Duke Hildebrod, who were now retiring. That potentate entreated Nigel to make fast the doors behind him, and pointing to the female who sat by the expiring fire with her limbs outstretched, like one whom the hand of death had already arrested, he whispered, 'Mind your hits, and mind your bargain, or I will cut your bowstring for you before you can draw it.'

Feeling deeply the ineffable brutality which could recommend the prosecuting such views over a wretch in such a condition, Lord Glenvarloch yet commanded his temper so far as to receive the advice in silence, and attend to the former part of it, by barring the door carefully behind Duke Hildebrod and his suite, with the tacit hope that he should never again see or hear of them. He then returned to the kitchen, in which the unhappy woman remained, her hands still clenched, her eyes fixed, and her limbs extended, like those of a person in a trance. Much moved by her situation, and with the prospect which lay before her, he endeavoured to awaken her to existence by every means in his power, and at length apparently succeeded in dispelling her stupor and attracting her attention. He then explained to her that he was in the act of leaving Whitefriars in a few hours, that his future destination was uncertain, but that he desired anxiously to know whether he could contribute to her protection by apprising any friend of her situation, or otherwise. With some difficulty she seemed to comprehend his meaning, and thanked him with her usual short ungracious manner. 'He might mean well,' she said, 'but he ought to know that the miserable had no friends.'

Nigel said, 'He would not willingly be importunate, but, as he was about to leave the Friars —'

She interrupted him — 'You are about to leave the Friars? I will go with you.'

'You go with me!' exclaimed Lord Glenvarloch.

'Yes,' she said, 'I will persuade my father to leave this murdering den.' But, as she spoke, the more perfect recollection of what had passed crowded on her mind. She hid her face in her hands, and burst out into a dreadful fit of sobs, moans, and lamentations, which terminated in hysterics, violent in proportion to the uncommon strength of her body and mind.

Lord Glenvarloch, shocked, confused, and inexperienced, was about to leave the house in quest of medical, or at least female, assistance; but the patient, when the paroxysm had somewhat spent its force, held him fast by the sleeve with one hand, covering her face with the other, while a copious flood of tears came to relieve the emotions of grief by which she had been so violently agitated.

'Do not leave me,' she said — 'do not leave me, and call no one. I have never been in this way before, and would not now,' she said, sitting upright, and wiping her eyes with her apron — 'would not now — but that — but that he loved *me*, if he loved nothing else that was human. To die so, and by such hands!'

And again the unhappy woman gave way to a paroxysm of sorrow, mingling her tears with sobbing, wailing, and all the abandonment of female grief, when at its utmost height. At length, she gradually recovered the austerity of her natural composure, and maintained it as if by a forcible exertion of resolution, repelling, as she spoke, the repeated returns of the hysterical affection, by such an effort as that by which epileptic patients are known to suspend the recurrence of their fits. Yet her mind, however resolved, could not so absolutely overcome the affection of her nerves but that she was agitated by strong fits of trembling, which, for a minute or two at a time, shook her whole frame in a manner frightful to witness. Nigel forgot his own situation, and, indeed, everything else, in the interest inspired by the unhappy woman before him — an interest which affected a proud spirit the more deeply, that she herself, with correspondent highness of mind, seemed determined to owe as little as possible either to the humanity or the pity of others.

'I am not wont to be in this way,' she said; 'but — but — nature will have power over the frail beings it has made. Over you, sir, I have some right; for, without you, I had not survived this awful night. I wish your aid had been either earlier or later; but you *have* saved my life, and you are bound to assist in making it endurable to me.'

'If you will show me how it is possible,' answered Nigel.

'You are going hence, you say, instantly; carry me with you,' said the unhappy woman. 'By my own efforts, I shall never escape from this wilderness of guilt and misery.'

'Alas! what can I do for you?' replied Nigel. 'My own way, and I must not deviate from it, leads me, in all probability, to a dungeon. I might, indeed, transport you from hence with me, if you could afterwards bestow yourself with any friend.'

'Friend!' she exclaimed, 'I have no friend; they have long since discarded us. A spectre arising from the dead were more welcome than I should be at the doors of those who have disclaimed us; and, if they were willing to restore their friendship to me now, I would despise it, because they withdrew it from him — from him (here she underwent strong but suppressed agitation, and then added firmly) — from *him* who lies yonder. I have no friend.' Here she paused; and then suddenly, as if recollecting herself, added, 'I have no friend; but I have that will purchase many — I have that which will purchase both friends and avengers. It is well thought of; I must not leave it for a prey to cheats and ruffians. Stranger, you must return to yonder room. Pass through it boldly to his — that is, to the sleeping-apartment; push the bedstead aside; beneath each of the posts is a brass plate, as if to support the weight, but it is that upon the left, nearest to the wall, which must serve your turn; press the corner of the plate, and it will spring up and show a keyhole, which this key will open. You will then lift a concealed trap-door, and in a cavity of the floor you will discover a small chest. Bring it hither; it shall accompany our journey, and it will be hard if the contents cannot purchase me a place of refuge.'

'But the door communicating with the kitchen has been locked by these people,' said Nigel.

'True, I had forgot; they had their reasons for that, doubtless,' answered she. 'But the secret passage from your apartment is open, and you may go that way.'

Lord Glenvarloch took the key, and, as he lighted a lamp to show him the way, she read in his countenance some unwillingness to the task imposed.

'You fear?' she said. 'There is no cause: the murderer and his victim are both at rest. Take courage, I will go with you myself: you cannot know the trick of the spring, and the chest will be too heavy for you.'

'No fear — no fear,' answered Lord Glenvarloch, ashamed of the construction she put upon a momentary hesitation, arising from a dislike to look upon what is horrible, often connected with those high-wrought minds which are the last to fear what is merely dangerous. 'I will do your errand as you desire; but for you, you must not — cannot go yonder.'

'I can — I will,' she said. 'I am composed. You shall see that I am so.' She took from the table a piece of unfinished sewing-work, and, with steadiness and composure, passed a silken thread into the eye of a fine needle. 'Could I have done that,' she said, with a smile yet more ghastly than her previous look of fixed despair, 'had not my heart and hand been both steady?'

She then led the way rapidly upstairs to Nigel's chamber, and proceeded through the secret passage with the same haste, as if she had feared her resolution might have failed her ere her purpose was executed. At the bottom of the stairs she paused a moment, before entering the fatal apartment, then hurried through with a rapid step to the sleeping-chamber beyond, followed closely by Lord Glenvarloch, whose reluctance to approach the scene of butchery was altogether lost in the anxiety which he felt on account of the survivor of the tragedy.

Her first action was to pull aside the curtains of her father's bed. The bed-clothes were thrown aside in confusion, doubtless in the action of his starting from sleep to oppose the entrance of the villains into the next apartment. The hard mattress scarcely showed the slight pressure where the emaciated body of the old miser had been deposited. His daughter sank beside the bed, clasped her hands, and prayed to Heaven, in a short and affecting manner, for support in her affliction, and for vengeance on the villains who had made her fatherless. A low-muttering and still more brief petition recommended to Heaven the soul of the sufferer, and invoked pardon for his sins, in virtue of the great Christian atonement.

This duty of piety performed, she signed to Nigel to aid her; and, having pushed aside the heavy bedstead, they saw the brass plate which Martha had described. She pressed the spring, and at once the plate starting up, showed the keyhole, and a large iron ring used in lifting the trap-door, which, when raised, displayed the strong-box, or small chest, she had mentioned, and which proved indeed so very weighty that it might perhaps have been scarcely possible for Nigel, though a very strong man, to have raised it without assistance.

Having replaced everything as they had found it, Nigel, with such help as his companion was able to afford, assumed his load, and made a shift to carry it into the next apartment, where lay the miserable owner, insensible to sounds and circumstances which, if anything could have broken his long last slumber, would certainly have done so.

His unfortunate daughter went up to his body, and had even the courage to remove the sheet which had been decently disposed over it. She put her hand on the heart, but there was no throb; held a feather to the lips, but there was no motion; then kissed with deep reverence the starting veins of the pale forehead, and then the emaciated hand.

'I would you could hear me,' she said, 'father! I would you could hear me swear that, if I now save what you most valued on earth, it is only to assist me in obtaining vengeance for your death!'

She replaced the covering, and, without a tear, a sigh, or an additional word of any kind, renewed her efforts, until they conveyed the strong-box betwixt them into Lord Glenvarloch's sleeping-apartment. 'It must pass,' she said, 'as part of your baggage. I will be in readiness so soon as the waterman calls.'

She retired; and Lord Glenvarloch, who saw the hour of their departure approach, tore down a part of the old hanging to make a covering, which he corded upon the trunk, lest the peculiarity of its shape, and the care with which it was banded and counterbanded with bars of steel, might afford suspicions respecting the treasure which it contained. Having taken this measure of precaution, he changed the rascally disguise, which he had assumed on entering Whitefriars, into a suit becoming his quality, and then, unable to sleep, though exhausted with the events of the night, he threw himself on his bed to await the summons of the waterman.

CHAPTER XXVI

> Give us good voyage, gentle stream. We stun not
> Thy sober ear with sounds of revelry,
> Wake not the slumbering echoes of thy banks
> With voice of flute and horn; we do but seek
> On the broad pathway of thy swelling bosom
> To glide in silent safety.
>
> *The Double Bridal.*

GREY, or rather yellow, light was beginning to twinkle through the fogs of Whitefriars, when a low tap at the door of the unhappy miser announced to Lord Glenvarloch the summons of the boatman. He found at the door the man whom he had seen the night before, with a companion.

'Come — come, master, let us get afloat,' said one of them, in a rough impressive whisper, 'time and tide wait for no man.'

'They shall not wait for me,' said Lord Glenvarloch; 'but I have some things to carry with me.'

'Ay — ay, no man will take a pair of oars now, Jack, unless he means to load the wherry like a six-horse wagon. When they don't want to shift the whole kitt, they take a sculler, and be d—d to them. Come — come, where be your rattle-traps?'

One of the men was soon sufficiently loaded, in his own estimation at least, with Lord Glenvarloch's mail and its accompaniments, with which burden he began to trudge towards the Temple Stairs. His comrade, who seemed the principal, began to handle the trunk which contained the miser's treasure, but pitched it down again in an instant, declaring, with a great oath, that it was as reasonable to expect a man to carry Paul's on his back. The daughter of Trapbois, who had by this time joined them, muffled up in a long dark hood and mantle, exclaimed to Lord Glenvarloch — 'Let them leave it if they will — let them leave it all; let us but escape from this horrible place.'

We have mentioned elsewhere that Nigel was a very athletic young man, and, impelled by a strong feeling of compassion and indignation, he showed his bodily strength singularly on this occasion, by seizing on the ponderous strong-box, and, by means of the rope he had cast around it, throwing it on his shoulders, and marching resolutely forward under a weight which would have sunk to the earth three young gallants, at the least, of our degenerate day. The waterman followed him in amazement, calling out, 'Why, master — master, you might as well gie me t' other end on 't!' and anon offered his assistance to support it in some degree behind, which, after the first minute or two, Nigel was fain to accept. His strength was almost exhausted when he reached the wherry, which was lying at the Temple Stairs according to appointment; and, when he pitched the trunk into it, the weight sank the bow of the boat so low in the water as wellnigh to overset it.

'We shall have as hard a fare of it,' said the waterman to his companion, 'as if we were ferrying over an honest bankrupt with all his secreted goods. Ho, ho! good woman, what are you stepping in for? our gunwale lies deep enough in the water without live lumber to boot.'

'This person comes with me,' said Lord Glenvarloch; 'she is for the present under my protection.'

'Come — come, master,' rejoined the fellow, 'that is out of my commission. You must not double my freight on me. She may go by land; and, as for protection, her face will protect her from Berwick to the Land's End.'

'You will not except at my doubling the loading if I double the fare?' said Nigel, determined on no account to relinquish the protection of this unhappy woman, for which he had already devised some sort of plan, likely now to be baffled by the characteristic rudeness of the Thames watermen.

'Ay, by G—, but I will except, though,' said the fellow with the green plush jacket. 'I will overload my wherry neither for love nor money. I love my boat as well as my wife, and a thought better.'

'Nay — nay, comrade,' said his mate, 'that is speaking no true water language. For double fare we are bound to row a witch in her eggshell if she bid us; and so pull away, Jack, and let us have no more prating.'

They got into the stream-way accordingly, and, although heavily laden, began to move down the river with reasonable speed.

The lighter vessels which passed, overtook, or crossed them, in their course, failed not to assail them with the boisterous raillery which was then called water-wit; for which the extreme plainness of Mistress Martha's features, contrasted with the youth, handsome figure, and good looks of Nigel, furnished the principal topics; while the circumstance of the boat being somewhat overloaded did not escape their notice. They were hailed successively as a grocer's wife upon a party of pleasure with her eldest apprentice; as an old woman carrying her grandson to school; and as a young strapping Irish-man, conveying an ancient maiden to Dr. Rigmarole's at Redriffe, who buckles beggars for a tester and a dram of Geneva. All this abuse was retorted in a similar strain of humour by Green-Jacket and his companion, who maintained the war of wit with the same alacrity with which they were assailed.

Meanwhile, Lord Glenvarloch asked his desolate companion if she had thought on any place where she could remain in safety with her property. She confessed, in more detail than formerly, that her father's character had left her no friends; and that, from the time he had betaken himself to Whitefriars, to escape certain legal consequences of his eager pursuit of gain, she had lived a life of total seclusion; not associating with the society which the place afforded, and, by her residence there, as well as her father's parsimony, effectually cut off from all other company. What she now wished was, in the first place, to obtain the shelter of a decent lodging, and the countenance of honest people, however low in life, until she should obtain legal advice as to the mode of obtaining justice on her father's murderer. She had no hesitation to charge the guilt upon Colepepper, commonly called Peppercull, whom she knew to be as capable of any act of treacherous cruelty as he was cowardly where actual manhood was required. He had been strongly suspected of two robberies before, one of which was coupled with an atrocious murder. He had, she intimated, made pretensions to her hand as the easiest and safest way of obtaining possession of her father's wealth; and, on her refusing his addresses, if they could be termed so, in the most positive terms, he had thrown out such obscure hints of vengeance as, joined with some imperfect assaults upon the house, had kept her in frequent alarm, both on her father's account and her own.

Nigel, but that his feeling of respectful delicacy to the unfortunate woman forbade him to do so, could here have communicated a circumstance corroborative of her suspicions, which had already occurred to his own mind. He recollected the hint that old Hildebrod threw forth on the preceding night, that some communication betwixt himself and Colepepper had hastened the catastrophe. As this communication related to the plan which Hildebrod had been pleased to form of promoting a marriage betwixt Nigel himself and the rich heiress of Trapbois, the fear of losing an opportunity not to be regained, together with the mean malignity of a low-bred ruffian, disappointed in a favourite scheme, was most likely to instigate the bravo to the deed of violence which had been committed. The reflection, that his own name was in some degree implicated with the causes of this horrid tragedy, doubled Lord Glenvarloch's anxiety in behalf of the victim whom he had rescued, while at the same time he formed the tacit resolution that, so soon as his own affairs were put upon some footing, he would contribute all in his power towards the investigation of this bloody affair.

After ascertaining from his companion that she could form no better plan of her own, he recommended to her to take up her lodging for the time at the house of his old landlord, Christie, the ship-chandler, at Paul's Wharf, describing the decency and honesty of that worthy couple, and expressing his hopes that they would receive her into their own house, or recommend her at least to that of some person for whom they would be responsible, until she should have time to enter upon other arrangements for herself.

The poor woman received advice so grateful to her in her desolate condition with an expression of thanks, brief indeed, but deeper than anything had yet extracted from the austerity of her natural disposition.

Lord Glenvarloch then proceeded to inform Martha that certain reasons connected with his personal safety called him immediately to Greenwich, and, therefore, it would not be in his power to accompany her to Christie's house, which he would otherwise have done with pleasure; but, tearing a leaf from his tablet, he wrote on it a few lines, addressed to his landlord, as a man of honesty and humanity, in which he described the bearer as a person who stood in singular necessity of temporary protection and good advice, for which her circumstances enabled her to make ample acknowledgment. He therefore requested John Christie, as his old and good friend, to afford her the shelter of his roof for a short time; or, if that might not be consistent with his convenience, at least to direct her to a proper lodging; and, finally, he imposed on him the additional, and somewhat more difficult, commission to recommend her to the counsel and services of an honest, at least a reputable and skilful, attorney, for the transacting some law business of importance. This note he subscribed with his real name, and, delivering it to his *protegée*, who received it with another deeply uttered 'I thank you,' which spoke the sterling feelings of her gratitude better than a thousand combined phrases, he commanded the watermen to pull in for Paul's Wharf, which they were now approaching.

'We have not time,' said Green-Jacket; 'we cannot be stopping every instant.'

But upon Nigel insisting upon his commands being obeyed, and adding, that it was for the purpose of putting the lady ashore, the waterman declared he would rather have her room than her company, and put the wherry alongside of the wharf accordingly. Here two of the porters, who ply in such places, were easily induced to undertake the charge of the ponderous strong-box, and at the same time to guide the owner to the well-known mansion of John Christie, with whom all who lived in that neighbourhood were perfectly acquainted.

The boat, much lightened of its load, went down the Thames at a rate increased in proportion. But we must forbear to pursue her in her voyage for a few minutes, since we have previously to mention the issue of Lord Glenvarloch's recommendation.

Mistress Martha Trapbois reached the shop in perfect safety, and was about to enter it, when a sickening sense of the uncertainty of her situation, and of the singularly painful task of telling her story, came over her so strongly, that she paused a moment at the very threshold of her proposed place of refuge, to think in what manner she could best second the recommendation of the friend whom Providence had raised up to her. Had she possessed that knowledge of the world from which her habits of life had completely excluded her, she might have known that the large sum of money which she brought along with her might, judiciously managed, have been a passport to her into the mansions of nobles and the palaces of princes. But, however conscious of its general power, which assumes so many forms and complexions, she was so inexperienced as to be most unnecessarily afraid that the means by which the wealth had been acquired might exclude its inheritrix from shelter even in the house of a humble tradesman.

While she thus delayed, a more reasonable cause for hesitation arose, in a considerable noise and altercation within the house, which grew louder and louder as the disputants issued forth upon the street or lane before the door.

The first who entered upon the scene was a tall, raw-boned, hard-favoured man, who stalked out of the shop hastily, with a gait like that of a Spaniard in a passion, who, disdaining to add speed to his locomotion by running, only condescends, in the utmost extremity of his angry haste, to add length to his stride. He faced about, so soon as he was out of the house, upon his pursuer, a decent-looking, elderly, plain tradesman — no other than John Christie himself, the owner of the shop and tenement, by whom he seemed to be followed, and who was in a state of agitation more than is usually expressed by such a person.

'I'll hear no more on't,' said the personage who first appeared on the scene — 'sir, I will hear no more on it. Besides being a most false and impudent figment, as I can testify, it is *scandaalum magnaatum*, sir — *scandaalum magnaatum*,' he reiterated with a broad accentuation of the first vowel, well known in the colleges of Edinburgh and Glasgow, which we can only express in print by doubling the said first of letters and of vowels, and which would have cheered the cockles of the reigning monarch had he been within hearing — as he was a severer stickler for what he deemed the genuine pronunciation of the Roman tongue than for any of the royal prerogatives, for which he was at times disposed to insist so strenuously in his speeches to Parliament.

'I care not an ounce of rotten cheese,' said John Christie in reply, 'what you call it — but it is TRUE; and I am a free Englishman, and have right to speak the truth in my own concerns; and your master is little better than a villain, and you no more than a swaggering coxcomb, whose head I will presently break, as I have known it well broken before on lighter occasion.'

And so saying, he flourished the paring shovel which usually made clean the steps of his little shop, and which he had caught up as the readiest weapon of working his foeman damage, and advanced therewith upon him. The cautious Scot, for such our readers must have already pronounced him, from his language and pedantry, drew back as the enraged ship-chandler approached, but in a surly manner, and bearing his hand on his sword-hilt rather in the act of one who was losing habitual forbearance and caution of deportment than as alarmed by the attack of an antagonist inferior to himself in youth, strength, and weapons.

'Bide back,' he said, 'Maister Christie — I say, bide back, and consult your safety, man. I have evited striking you in your ain house under muckle provocation, because I am ignorant how the laws here may pronounce respecting burglary and hame-sucken, and such matters; and, besides, I would not willingly hurt ye, man, e'en on the causeway, that is free to us baith, because I mind your kindness of lang syne, and partly consider ye as a poor deceived creature. But deil d—n me, sir, and

I am not wont to swear, but if you touch my Scotch shouther with that shule of yours, I will make six inches of my Andrew Ferrara deevilish intimate with your guts, neighbour."

And therewithal, though still retreating from the brandished shovel, he made one-third of the basket-hilted broadsword which he wore visible from the sheath. The wrath of John Christie was abated, either by his natural temperance of disposition, or perhaps in part by the glimmer of cold steel, which flashed on him from his adversary's last action.

'I would do well to cry clubs on thee, and have thee ducked at the wharf,' he said, grounding his shovel, however, at the same time, 'for a paltry swaggerer, that would draw thy bit of iron there on an honest citizen before his own door; but get thee gone, and reckon on a salt eel for thy supper, if thou shouldst ever come near my house again. I wish it had been at the bottom of Thames when it first gave the use of its roof to smooth-faced, oily-tongued, double-minded Scots thieves!'

'It's an ill bird that fouls its own nest,' replied his adversary, not perhaps the less bold that he saw matters were taking the turn of a pacific debate; 'and a pity it is that a kindly Scot should ever have married in foreign parts, and given life to a purse-proud, pudding-headed, fat-gutted, lean-brained Southron, e'en such as you, Maister Christie. But fare ye weel — fare ye weel, for ever and a day; and, if you quarrel wi' a Scot again, man, say as mickle ill o' himsell as ye like, but say nane of his patron or of his countrymen, or it will scarce be your flat cap that will keep your lang lugs from the sharp abridgment of a Highland whinger, man.'

And if you continue your insolence to me before my own door were it but two minutes longer,' retorted John Christie, 'I will call the constable, and make your Scottish ankles acquainted with an English pair of stocks!'

So saying, he turned to retire into his shop with some show of victory; for his enemy, whatever might be his innate valour, manifested no desire to drive matters to extremity — conscious, perhaps, that whatever advantage he might gain in single combat with John Christie would be more than overbalanced by incurring an affair with the constituted authorities of Old England, not at that time apt to be particularly favourable to their new fellow-subjects, in the various successive broils which were then constantly taking place between the individuals of two proud nations, who still retained a stronger sense of their national animosity during centuries than of their late union for a few years under the government of the same prince.

Mrs. Martha Trapbois had dwelt too long in Alsatia to be either surprised or terrified at the altercation she had witnessed. Indeed, she only wondered that the debate did not end in some of those acts of violence by which they were usually terminated in the sanctuary. As the disputants separated from each other, she, who had no idea that the cause of the quarrel was more deeply rooted than in the daily scenes of the same nature which she had heard of or witnessed, did not hesitate to stop Master Christie in his return to his shop, and present to him the letter which Lord Glenvarloch had given to her. Had she been better acquainted with life and its business, she would certainly have waited for a more temperate moment; and she had reason to repent of her precipitation, when, without saying a single word, or taking the trouble to gather more of the information contained in the letter than was expressed in the subscription, the incensed ship-chandler threw it down on the ground, trampled it in high disdain, and, without addressing a single word to the bearer, except, indeed, something much more like a hearty curse than was perfectly consistent with his own grave appearance, he retired into his shop and shut the hatch-door.

It was with the most inexpressible anguish that the desolate, friendless, and unhappy female thus beheld her sole hope of succour, countenance, and protection vanish at once, without being able to conceive a reason; for, to do her justice, the idea that her friend, whom she knew by the name of Nigel Grahame, had imposed on her — a solution which might readily have occurred to many in her situation — never once entered her mind. Although it was not her temper easily to bend her mind to entreaty, she could not help exclaiming after the ireful and retreating ship-chandler — 'Good master, hear me but a moment! for mercy's sake, for honesty's sake!'

'Mercy and honesty from him, mistress!' said the Scot, who, though he essayed not to interrupt the retreat of his antagonist, still kept stout possession of the field of action; 'ye might as weel expect brandy from bean-stalks, or milk from a craig of blue whunstane. The man is mad — horn mad, to boot.'

'I must have mistaken the person to whom the letter was addressed, then'; and, as she spoke, Mistress Martha Trapbois was in the act of stooping to lift the paper which had been so uncourteously received. Her companion, with natural civility, anticipated her purpose; but, what was not quite so much in etiquette, he took a sly glance at it as he was about to hand it to her, and his eye having caught the subscription, he said, with surprise, 'Glenvarloch — Nigel Olifaunt of Glenvarloch! Do you know the Lord Glenvarloch, mistress?'

'I know not of whom you speak,' said Mrs. Martha, peevishly. 'I had that paper from one Master Nigel Gram.'

'Nigel Grahame! — umph. O ay, very true — I had forgot,' said the Scotsman. 'A tall, well-set young man, about my height; bright blue eyes like a hawk's; a pleasant speech, something leaning to the kindly North-country accentuation, but not much, in respect to his having been resident abroad?'

'All this is true; and what of it all?' said the daughter of the miser.

'Hair of my complexion?'

'Yours is red,' replied she.

'I pray you peace,' said the Scotsman. 'I was going to say — of my complexion, but with a deeper shade of the chestnut. Weel, mistress, if I have guessed the man aright, he is one with whom I am, and have been, intimate and familiar — nay, I may truly say I have done him much service in my time, and may live to do him more. I had indeed a sincere good-will for him, and I doubt he has been much at a loss since we parted; but the fault is not mine. Wherefore, as this letter will not avail you with him to whom it is directed, you may believe that Heaven hath sent it to me, who have a special regard for the writer. I have, besides, as much mercy and honesty within me as man can weel make his bread with, and am willing to aid any distressed creature, that is my friend's friend, with my counsel, and otherwise, so that I am not put to much charges, being in a strange country, like a poor lamb that has wandered from its ain native hirsel, and leaves a tait of its woo' in every d—d Southron bramble that comes across it.' While he spoke thus, he read the contents of the letter, without waiting for permission, and then continued — 'And so this is all that you are wanting, my dove? nothing more than safe and honourable lodging and sustenance, upon your own charges?'

'Nothing more,' said she. 'If you are a man and a Christian, you will help me to what I need so much.'

'A man I am,' replied the formal Caledonian, 'e'en sic as ye see me; and a Christian I may call myself, though unworthy, and though I have heard little pure doctrine since I came hither — a' polluted with men's devices — ahem! Weel, an if ye be an honest woman (here he peeped under her muffler), as an honest woman ye seem likely to be — though, let me tell you, they are a kind of cattle not so rife in the streets of this city as I would desire them; I was almost strangled with my own band by twa rampallians, wha wanted yestreen, nae farther gane, to harle me into a change-house — however, if ye be a decent honest woman (here he took another peep at features certainly bearing no beauty which could infer suspicion), as decent and honest ye seem to be, why, I will advise you to a decent house, where you will get douce, quiet entertainment, on reasonable terms, and the occasional benefit of my own counsel and direction — that is, from time to time, as my other avocations may permit.'

'May I venture to accept of such an offer from a stranger?" said Martha, with natural hesitation.

'Troth, I see nothing to hinder you, mistress,' replied the bonny Scot; 'ye can but see the place, and do after as ye think best. Besides, we are nae such strangers, neither; for I know your friend, and you, it's like, know mine, whilk knowledge, on either hand, is a medium of communication between us, even as the middle of the string connecteth its twa ends or extremities. But I will enlarge on this further as we pass along, gin ye list to bid your twa lazy loons of porters there lift up your little kist between them, whilk ae true Scotsman might carry under his arm. Let me tell you, mistress, ye will soon make a toom pock-end of it in Lon'on, if you hire twa knaves to do the work of ane.'

So saying, he led the way, followed by Mistress Martha Trapbois, whose singular destiny, though it had heaped her with wealth, had left her, for the moment, no wiser counsellor, or more distinguished protector, than honest Richie Moniplies, a discarded serving-man.

CHAPTER XXVII

> This way lie safety and a sure retreat;
> Yonder lie danger, shame, and punishment.
> Most welcome danger then. Nay, let me say,
> Though spoke with swelling heart, welcome e'en shame;
> And welcome punishment; for, call me guilty,
> I do but pay the tax that 's due to justice;
> And call me guiltless, then that punishment
> Is shame to those alone who do inflict it.
>
> *The Tribunal.*

WE left Lord Glenvarloch, to whose fortunes our story chiefly attaches itself, gliding swiftly down the Thames. He was not, as the reader may have observed, very affable in his disposition, or apt to enter into conversation with those into whose company he was casually thrown. This was, indeed, an error in his conduct, arising less from pride, though of that feeling we do not pretend to exculpate him, than from a sort of bashful reluctance to mix in the conversation of those with whom he was not familiar. It is a fault only to be cured by experience and knowledge of the world, which soon teaches every sensible and acute person the important lesson that amusement, and, what is of more consequence, that information and increase of knowledge, are to be derived from the conversation of every individual whatever, with whom he is thrown into a natural train of communication. For ourselves, we can assure the reader—and perhaps, if we have ever been able to afford him amusement, it is owing in a great degree to this cause — that we never found ourselves in company with the stupidest of all possible companions in a post-chaise, or with the most arrant cumber-corner that ever occupied a place in the mail-coach, without finding that, in the course of our conversation with him, we had some ideas suggested to us, either grave or gay, or some information communicated in the course of our journey, which we should have regretted not to have learned, and which we should be sorry to have immediately forgotten. But Nigel was somewhat immured within the Bastile of his rank, as some philosopher (Tom Paine, we think) has happily enough expressed that sort of shyness which men of dignified situations are apt to be beset with, rather from not exactly knowing how far, or with whom, they ought to be familiar, than from any real touch of aristocratic pride. Besides, the immediate pressure of our adventurer's own affairs was such as exclusively to engross his attention.

He sat, therefore, wrapped in his cloak, in the stern of the boat, with his mind entirely bent upon the probable issue of the interview with his sovereign, which it was his purpose to seek; for which abstraction of mind he may be fully justified, although, perhaps, by questioning the watermen who were transporting him down the river, he might have discovered matters of high concernment to him.

At any rate, Nigel remained silent till the wherry approached the town of Greenwich, when he commanded the men to put in for the nearest landing-place, as it was his purpose to go ashore there, and dismiss them from further attendance.

'That is not possible,' said the fellow with the green jacket, who, as we have already said, seemed to take on himself the charge of pilotage. 'We must go,' he continued, 'to Gravesend, where a Scottish vessel, which dropped down the river last tide for the very purpose, lies with her anchor a-peak, waiting to carry you to your own dear Northern country. Your hammock is slung, and all is ready for you, and you talk of going ashore at Greenwich, as seriously as if such a thing were possible!'

'I see no impossibility,' said Nigel, 'in your landing me where I desire to be landed; but very little possibility of your carrying me anywhere I am not desirous of going.'

'Why, whether do you manage the wherry, or we, master?' asked Green-Jacket, in a tone betwixt jest and earnest; 'I take it she will go the way we row her.'

'Ay,' retorted Nigel, 'but I take it you will row her on the course I direct you, otherwise your chance of payment is but a poor one.'

'Suppose we are content to risk that,' said the undaunted waterman, 'I wish to know how you, who talk so big — I mean no offence, master, but you *do* talk big — would help yourself in such a case?'

'Simply thus,' answered Lord Glenvarloch. 'You saw me, an hour since, bring down to the boat a trunk that neither of you could lift. If we are to contest the destination of our voyage, the same strength which tossed that chest into the wherry will suffice to fling you out of it; wherefore, before we begin the scuffle, I pray you to remember that, whither I would go, there I will oblige you to carry me.'

'Gramercy for your kindness,' said Green-Jacket; 'and now mark me in return. My comrade and I are two men, and you, were you as stout as George-a-Green, can pass but for one; and two, you will allow, are more than a match for one. You mistake in your reckoning, my friend.'

'It is you who mistake,' answered Nigel, who began to grow warm. 'It is I who am three to two, sirrah: I carry two men's lives at my girdle.' So saying, he opened his cloak and showed the two pistols which he had disposed at his girdle.

Green-Jacket was unmoved at the display. 'I have got,' said he, 'a pair of barkers that will match yours,' and he showed that he also was armed with pistols; 'so you may begin as soon as you list.'

'Then,' said Lord Glenvarloch, drawing forth and cocking a pistol, 'the sooner the better. Take notice, I hold you as a ruffian, who have declared you will put force on my person; and that I will shoot you through the head if you do not instantly put me ashore at Greenwich.'

The other waterman, alarmed at Nigel's gesture, lay upon his oar; but Green-Jacket replied coolly, 'Look you, master, I should not care a tester to venture a life with you on this matter; but the truth is, I am employed to do you good, and not to do you harm.'

'By whom are you employed?' said the Lord Glenvarloch; 'or who dare concern themselves in me, or my affairs, without my authority?'

'As to that,' answered the waterman, in the same tone of indifference, 'I shall not show my commission. For myself, I care not, as I said, whether you land at Greenwich to get yourself hanged, or go down to get aboard the Royal Thistle, to make your escape to your own country; you will be equally out of my reach either way. But it is fair to put the choice before you.'

'My choice is made,' said Nigel. 'I have told you thrice already it is my pleasure to be landed at Greenwich.'

'Write it on a piece of paper,' said the waterman, 'that such is your positive will; I must have something to show to my employers that the transgression of their orders lies with yourself, not with me.'

'I choose to hold this trinket in my hand for the present,' said Nigel, showing his pistol, 'and will write you the acquittance when I go ashore.'

'I would not go ashore with you for a hundred pieces,' said the waterman. 'Ill-luck has ever attended you, except in small gaming; do me fair justice, and give me the testimony I desire. If you are afraid of foul play while you write it, you may hold my pistols, if you will.'

He offered the weapons to Nigel accordingly, who, while they were under his control, and all possibility of his being taken at advantage was excluded, no longer hesitated to give the waterman an acknowledgment, in the following terms: 'Jack in the Green, with his mate, belonging to the wherry called the Jolly Raven, have done their duty faithfully by me, landing me at Greenwich by my express command; and being themselves willing and desirous to carry me on board the Royal Thistle, presently lying at Gravesend.' Having finished this acknowledgment, which he signed with the letters 'N. O. G.' as indicating his name and title, he again requested to know of the waterman to whom he delivered it the name of his employers.

'Sir,' replied Jack in the Green, 'I have respected your secret, do not you seek to pry into mine. It would do you no good to know for whom I am taking this present trouble; and, to be brief, you shall not know it; and, if you will fight in the quarrel, as you said even now, the sooner we begin the better. Only this you may be cock-sure of, that we designed you no harm, and that, if you fall into any, it will be of your own wilful seeking.'

As he spoke, they approached the landing-place, where Nigel instantly jumped ashore. The waterman placed his small mail-trunk on the stairs, observing, that there were plenty of spare hands about, to carry it where he would.

'We part friends, I hope, my lads,' said the young nobleman, offering at the same time a piece of money more than double the usual fare to the boatmen.

'We part as we met,' answered Green-Jacket, 'and, for your money, I am paid sufficiently with this bit of paper. Only, if you owe me any love for the cast I have given you, I pray you not to dive so deep into the pockets of the next apprentice that you find fool enough to play the cavalier. And you, you greedy swine,' said he to his companion, who still had a longing eye fixed on the money which Nigel continued to offer, 'push off, or, if I take a stretcher in hand, I'll break the knave's pate of thee.'

The fellow pushed off, as he was commanded, but still could not help muttering, 'This was entirely out of watermen's rules.'

Glenvarloch, though without the devotion of the 'injured Thales' of the moralist to the memory of that great princess, had now attained

> The hallow'd soil which gave Eliza birth,

whose halls were now less respectably occupied by her successor. It was not, as has been well shown by a late author, that James was void either of parts or of good intentions; and his predecessor was at least as arbitrary in effect as he was in theory. But, while Elizabeth possessed a sternness of masculine sense and determination which rendered even her weaknesses, some of which were in themselves ridiculous, in a certain degree respectable, James, on the other hand, was so utterly devoid of 'firm resolve,' so well called by the Scottish bard,

> The stalk of carle-hemp in man,

that even his virtues and his good meaning became laughable, from the whimsical uncertainty of his conduct; so that the wisest things he ever said, and the best actions he ever did, were often touched with a strain of the ludicrous and fidgety character of the man. Accordingly, though at different periods of his reign, he contrived to acquire with his people a certain degree of temporary popularity, it never long outlived the occasion which produced it; so true it is, that the mass of mankind will respect a monarch stained with actual guilt more than one whose foibles render him only ridiculous.

To return from this digression, Lord Glenvarloch soon received, as Green-Jacket had assured him, the offer of an idle bargeman to transport his baggage where he listed; but that *where* was a question of momentary doubt. At length, recollecting the necessity that his hair and beard should be properly arranged before he attempted to enter the royal presence, and desirous, at the same time, of obtaining some information of the motions of the sovereign and of the court, he desired to be guided to the next barber's shop, which we have already mentioned as the place where news of every kind circled and centred. He was speedily shown the way to such an emporium of intelligence, and soon found he was likely to hear all he desired to know, and much more, while his head was subjected to the art of a nimble tonsor, the glibness of whose tongue kept pace with the nimbleness of his fingers, while he ran on, without stint or stop, in the following excursive manner: —

'The court here, master? — yes, master — much to the advantage of trade — good custom stirring. His Majesty loves Greenwich — hunts every morning in the Park — all decent persons admitted that have the entries of the palace — no rabble — frightened the King's horse with their hallooing, the uncombed slaves. Yes, sir, the beard more peaked? Yes, master, so it is worn. I know the last cut — dress several of the courtiers — one valet of the chamber, two pages of the body, the clerk of the kitchen, three running footmen, two dog-boys, and an honourable Scottish knight, Sir Munko Malgrowler.'

'Malagrowther, I suppose?' said Nigel, thrusting in his conjectured emendation, with infinite difficulty, betwixt two clauses of the barber's text.

'Yes, sir — Malcrowder, sir, as you say, sir — hard names the Scots have, sir, for an English mouth. Sir Munko is a handsome person, sir, — perhaps you know him? — bating the loss of his fingers, and the lameness of his leg, and the length of his chin. Sir, it takes me one minute twelve seconds more time to trim that chin of his than any chin that I know in the town of Greenwich, sir. But he is a very comely gentleman for all that; and a pleasant — a very pleasant gentleman, sir; and a good-humoured, saving that he is so deaf he can never hear good of any one, and so wise, that he can never believe it; but he is a very good-natured gentleman for all that, except when one speaks too low, or when a hair turns awry. Did I graze you, sir? We shall put it to rights in a moment, with one drop of styptic — my styptic, or rather my wife's, sir. She makes the water herself. One drop of the styptic, sir, and a bit of black taffeta patch, just big enough to be the saddle to a flea, sir. Yes, sir, rather improves than otherwise. The Prince had a patch the other day, and so had the Duke; and, if you will believe me, there are seventeen yards three-quarters of black taffeta already cut into patches for the courtiers.'

'But Sir Mungo Malagrowther?' again interjected Nigel, with difficulty.

'Ay, ay, sir — Sir Munko, as you say; a pleasant, good-humoured gentleman as ever — To be spoken with, did you say? O ay, easily to be spoken withal, that is, as easily as his infirmity will permit. He will presently, unless some one hath asked him forth to breakfast, be taking his bone of broiled beef at my neighbour Ned Kilderkin's yonder, removed from over the way. Ned keeps an eating-house, sir, famous for pork-griskins; but Sir Munko cannot abide pork, no more than the King's most sacred Majesty,[1] nor my Lord Duke of Lennox, nor Lord Dalgarno — nay, I am sure, sir, if I touched you this time, it was your fault, not mine. But a single drop of the styptic, another little patch that would make a doublet for a flea, just under the left mustache; it will become you when you smile, sir, as well as a dimple; and if you would salute your fair mistress — but I beg pardon, you are a grave gentleman, very grave to be so young. Hope I have given no offence; it is my duty to entertain customers — my duty, sir, and my pleasure. Sir Munko Malcrowther? Yes, sir, I dare say he is at this moment in Ned's eating-house, for few folks ask him out, now Lord Huntinglen is gone to London. You will get touched again. Yes, sir, there you shall find him with his can of single ale, stirred with a sprig of rosemary, for he never drinks strong potations, sir, unless to oblige Lord Huntinglen — take heed, sir — or any other person who asks him forth to breakfast; but single beer he always drinks at Ned's, with his broiled bone of beef or mutton — or, it may be, lamb at the season; but not pork, though Ned is famous for his griskins. But the Scots never eat pork — strange that! some folk think they are a sort of Jews. There is a resemblance, sir. Do you not think so? Then they call our most gracious sovereign the Second Solomon, and Solomon, you know, was king of the Jews; so the thing bears a face, you see. I believe, sir, you will find yourself trimmed now to your content. I will be judged by the fair mistress of your affections. Crave pardon — no offence, I trust. Pray, consult the glass. One touch of the crisping-tongs, to reduce this straggler. Thank your munificence, sir; hope your custom while you stay in Greenwich. Would you have a tune on that ghittern, to put your temper in concord for the day? Twang, twang — twang, twang, dillo. Something out of tune, sir — too many hands to touch it — we cannot keep these things like artists. Let me help you with your cloak, sir — yes, sir. You would not play yourself, sir, would you? Way to Sir Munko's eating-house? Yes, sir; but it is Ned's eating-house, not Sir Munko's. The knight, to be sure, eats there, and that makes it his eating-house in some sense, sir — ha, ha! Yonder it is, removed from over the way, new white-washed posts, and red lattice — fat man in his doublet at the door — Ned himself, sir — worth a thousand pounds, they say; better singeing pigs' faces than trimming courtiers, but ours is the less mechanical vocation. Farewell, sir; hope your custom.' So saying, he at length permitted Nigel to depart, whose ears, so long tormented with his continued babble, tingled when it had ceased, as if a bell had been rung close to them for the same space of time.

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[1] See Note 3.

Upon his arrival at the eating-house, where he proposed to meet with Sir Mungo Malagrowther, from whom, in despair of better advice, he trusted to receive some information as to the best mode of introducing himself into the royal presence, Lord Glenvarloch found, in the host with whom he communed, the consequential taciturnity of an Englishman well to pass in the world. Ned Kilderkin spoke as a banker writes, only touching the needful. Being asked if Sir Mungo Malagrowther was there? he replied, 'No.' Being interrogated whether he was expected, he said, 'Yes.' And being again required to say when he was expected, he answered, 'Presently.' As Lord Glenvarloch next inquired whether he himself could have any breakfast? the landlord wasted not even a syllable in reply, but, ushering him into a neat room where there were several tables, he placed one of them before an arm-chair, and beckoning Lord Glenvarloch to take possession, he set before him, in a very few minutes, a substantial repast of roast-beef, together with a foaming tankard, to which refreshment the keen air of the river disposed him, notwithstanding his mental embarrassments, to do much honour.

While Nigel was thus engaged in discussing his commons, but raising his head at the same time whenever he heard the door of the apartment open, eagerly desiring the arrival of Sir Mungo Malagrowther (an event which had seldom been expected by any one with so much anxious interest), a personage, as it seemed, of at least equal importance with the knight, entered into the apartment, and began to hold earnest colloquy with the publican, who thought proper to carry on the conference on his side unbonneted. This important gentleman's occupation might be guessed from his dress. A milk-white jerkin, and hose of white kersey; a white apron twisted around his body in the manner of a sash, in which, instead of a warlike dagger, was stuck a long-bladed knife, hilted with buck's-horn; a white nightcap on his head, under which his hair was neatly tucked, sufficiently pourtrayed him as one of those priests of Comus whom the vulgar call cooks; and the air with which he rated the publican for having neglected to send some provisions to the palace showed that he ministered to royalty itself.

'This will never answer,' he said, 'Master Kilderkin; the King twice asked for sweetbreads and fricasseed coxcombs, which are a favourite dish of his most sacred Majesty, and they were not to be had, because Master Kilderkin had not supplied them to the clerk of the kitchen, as by bargain bound.' Here Kilderkin made some apology, brief, according to his own nature, and muttered in a lowly tone after the fashion of all who find themselves in a scrape. His superior replied, in a lofty strain of voice, 'Do not tell me of the carrier and his wain, and of the hen-coops coming from Norfolk with the poultry; a loyal man would have sent an express — he would have gone upon his stumps, like Widdrington. What if the King had lost his appetite, Master Kilderkin? What if his most sacred Majesty had lost his dinner? O, Master Kilderkin, if you had but the just sense of the dignity of our profession, which is told of by the witty African slave, for so the King's most excellent Majesty designates him, Publius Terentius, *Tanquam in speculo, in patinas inspicere jubeo.*'

'You are learned, Master Linklater,' replied the English publican, compelling, as it were with difficulty, his mouth to utter three or four words consecutively.

'A poor smatterer,' said Mr. Linklater; 'but it would be a shame to us, who are his most excellent Majesty's countrymen, not in some sort to have cherished those arts wherewith he is so deeply embued. *Regis ad exemplar*, Master Kilderkin, *totus componitur orbis;* which is as much as to say, as the King quotes the cook learns. In brief, Master Kilderkin, having had the luck to be bred where humanities may be had at the matter of an English five groats by the quarter, I, like others, have acquired — ahem — hem!' Here, the speaker's eye having fallen upon Lord Glenvarloch, he suddenly stopped in his learned harangue, with such symptoms of embarrassment as induced Ned Kilderkin to stretch his tactiturnity so far as not only to ask him what he ailed, but whether he would take anything.

'Ail nothing,' replied the learned rival of the philosophical Syrus — 'nothing — and yet I do feel a little giddy. I could taste a glass of your dame's *aqua mirabilis.*'

'I will fetch it,' said Ned, giving a nod; and his back was no sooner turned than the cook walked near the table where Lord Glenvarloch was seated, and regarding him with a look of significance, where more was meant than met the ear, said — 'You are a stranger in Greenwich, sir. I advise you to take the opportunity to step into the Park; the western wicket was ajar when I came hither; I think it will be locked presently, so you had better make the best of your way — that is, if you have any curiosity. The venison are coming into season just now, sir, and there is a pleasure in looking at a hart of grease. I always think when they are bounding so blythely past, what a pleasure it would be to broach their plump haunches on a spit, and to embattle their breasts in a noble fortification of puff-paste, with plenty of black pepper.'

He said no more, as Kilderkin re-ëntered with the cordial, but edged off from Nigel without waiting any reply, only repeating the same look of intelligence with which he had accosted him.

Nothing makes men's wits so alert as personal danger. Nigel took the first opportunity which his host's attention to the yeoman of the royal kitchen permitted to discharge his reckoning, and readily obtained a direction to the wicket in question. He found it upon the latch, as he had been taught to expect; and perceived that it admitted him to a narrow foot-path, which traversed a close and tangled thicket, designed for the cover of the does and the young fawns. Here he conjectured it would be proper to wait; nor had he been stationary above five minutes, when the cook, scalded as much with heat of motion as ever he had been at his huge fireplace, arrived almost breathless, and with his pass-key hastily locked the wicket behind him.

Ere Lord Glenvarloch had time to speculate upon this action, the man approached with anxiety, and said — 'Good lord, my Lord Glenvarloch, why will you endanger yourself thus?'

'You know me then, my friend?' said Nigel.

'Not much of that, my lord; but I know your honour's noble house well. My name is Laurie Linklater, my lord.'

'Linklater!' repeated Nigel. 'I should recollect —'

'Under your lordship's favour,' he continued, 'I was 'prentice, my lord, to old Mungo Moniplies, the flesher at the wanton West Port of Edinburgh, which I wish I saw again before I died. And your honour's noble father having taken Richie Moniplies into his house to wait on your lordship, there was a sort of connexion, your lordship sees.'

'Ah!' said Lord Glenvarloch, 'I had almost forgot your name, but not your kind purpose. You tried to put Richie in the way of presenting a supplication to his Majesty?'

'Most true, my lord,' replied the King's cook. 'I had like to have come by mischief in the job; for Richie, who was always wilful, "wadna be guided by me," as the sang says. But nobody amongst these brave English cooks can kittle up his Majesty's most sacred palate with our own gusty Scottish dishes. So I e'en betook myself to my craft, and concocted a mess of friar's chicken for the soup, and a savoury *hachis*, that made the whole cabal coup the crans; and, instead of disgrace, I came by preferment. I am one of the clerks of the kitchen now, make me thankful! with a finger in the purveyor's office, and may get my whole hand in by and by.'

'I am truly glad,' said Nigel, 'to hear that you have not suffered on my account — still more so at your good fortune.'

'You bear a kind heart, my lord,' said Linklater, 'and do not forget poor people; and, troth, I see not why they should be forgotten, since the king's errand may sometimes fall in the cadger's gate. I have followed your lordship in the street, just to look at such a stately shoot of the old oak-tree; and my heart jumped into my throat when I saw you sitting openly in the eating-house yonder, and knew there was such danger to your person.'

'What! there are warrants against me, then?' said Nigel.

'It is even true, my lord; and there are those are willing to blacken you as much as they can. God forgive them, that would sacrifice an honourable house for their own base ends!'

'Amen,' said Nigel.

'For, say your lordship may have been a little wild, like other young gentlemen—'

'We have little time to talk of it, my friend,' said Nigel. 'The point in question is, how am I to get speech of the King?'

'The King, my lord!' said Linklater, in astonishment; 'why, will not that be rushing wilfully into danger? — scalding yourself, as I may say, with your own ladle?'

'My good friend,' answered Nigel, 'my experience of the court, and my knowledge of the circumstances in which I stand, tell me that the manliest and most direct road is, in my case, the surest and the safest. The King has both a head to apprehend what is just and a heart to do what is kind.'

'It is e'en true, my lord, and so we, his old servants, know,' added Linklater; 'but, woe's me, if you knew how many folks make it their daily and nightly purpose to set his head against his heart, and his heart against his head: to make him do hard things because they are called just, and unjust things because they are represented as kind. Woe 's me! it is with his sacred Majesty and the favourites who work upon him even according to the homely proverb that men taunt my calling with, "God sends good meat, but the devil sends cooks."'

'It signifies not talking of it, my good friend,' said Nigel, 'I must take my risk; my honour peremptorily demands it. They may maim me or beggar me, but they shall not say I fled from my accusers. My peers shall hear my vindication.'

'Your peers!' exclaimed the cook. 'Alack-a-day, my lord, we are not in Scotland, where the nobles can bang it out bravely, were it even with the King himself, now and then. This mess must be cooked in the Star Chamber, and that is an oven seven times heated, my lord; and yet, if you are determined to see the King, I will not say but you may find some favour, for he likes well anything that is appealed directly to his own wisdom, and sometimes, in the like cases, I have known him stick by his own opinion, which is always a fair one. Only mind, if you will forgive me, my lord—mind to spice high with

Latin; a curn or two of Greek would not be amiss; and, if you can bring in anything about the judgment of Solomon, in the original Hebrew, and season with a merry jest or so, the dish will be the more palatable. Truly, I think that, besides my skill in art, I owe much to the stripes of the rector of the High School, who imprinted on my mind that cooking scene in the "Heautontimorumenos."'

'Leaving that aside, my friend,' said Lord Glenvarloch, 'can you inform me which way I shall most readily get to the sight and speech of the King?'

'To the sight of him readily enough,' said Linklater; 'he is galloping about these alleys, to see them strike the hart, to get him an appetite for a nooning — and that reminds me, I should be in the kitchen. To the speech of the King you will not come so easily, unless you could either meet him alone, which rarely chances, or wait for him among the crowd that go to see him alight. And now, farewell, my lord, and God speed! If I could do more for you, I would offer it.'

'You have done enough, perhaps, to endanger yourself,' said Lord Glenvarloch. 'I pray you to be gone, and leave me to my fate.'

The honest cook lingered, but a nearer burst of the horns apprised him that there was no time to lose; and, acquainting Nigel that he would leave the postern door on the latch to secure his retreat in that direction, he bade God bless him, and farewell.

In the kindness of this humble countryman, flowing partly from national partiality, partly from a sense of long-remembered benefits, which had been scarce thought on by those who had bestowed them, Lord

Glenvarloch thought he saw the last touch of sympathy which he was to receive in this cold and courtly region, and felt that he must now be sufficient to himself or be utterly lost.

He traversed more than one alley, guided by the sounds of the chase, and met several of the inferior attendants upon the King's sport, who regarded him only as one of the spectators who were sometimes permitted to enter the Park by the concurrence of the officers about the court. Still there was no appearance of James or any of his principal courtiers, and Nigel began to think whether, at the risk of incurring disgrace similar to that which had attended the rash exploit of Richie Moniplies, he should not repair to the palace gate, in order to address the King on his return, when Fortune presented him the opportunity of doing so, in her own way.

He was in one of those long walks by which the Park was traversed, when he heard, first a distant rustling, then the rapid approach of hoofs shaking the firm earth on which he stood, then a distant halloo, warned by which he stood up by the side of the avenue, leaving free room for the passage of the chase. The stag, reeling, covered with foam, and blackened with sweat, his nostrils expanded as he gasped for breath, made a shift to come up as far as where Nigel stood, and, without turning to bay, was there pulled down by two tall greyhounds of the breed still used by the hardy deer-stalkers of the Scottish Highlands, but which has been long unknown in England. One dog struck at the buck's throat, another dashed his sharp nose and fangs, I might almost say, into the animal's bowels. It would have been natural for Lord Glenvarloch, himself persecuted as if by

The Royal Palace, Greenwich

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hunters, to have thought upon the occasion like the melancholy Jacques; but habit is a strange matter, and I fear that his feelings on the occasion were rather those of the practised huntsman than of the moralist. He had no time, however, to indulge them, for mark what befell.

A single horseman followed the chase, upon a steed so thoroughly subjected to the rein that it obeyed the touch of the bridle as if it had been a mechanical impulse operating on the nicest piece of machinery; so that, seated deep in his demi-pique saddle, and so trussed up there as to make falling almost impossible, the rider, without either fear or hesitation, might increase or diminish the speed at which he rode, which, even on the most animating occasions of the chase, seldom exceeded three-fourths of a gallop, the horse keeping his haunches under him, and never stretching forward beyond the managed pace of the academy. The security with which he chose to prosecute even this favourite, and, in the ordinary case, somewhat dangerous, amusement, as well as the rest of his equipage, marked King James. No attendant was within sight; indeed, it was often a nice strain of flattery to permit the sovereign to suppose he had outridden and distanced all the rest of the chase.

'Weel dune, Bash — weel dune, Battie!' he exclaimed, as he came up. 'By the honour of a king, ye are a credit to the Braes of Balwhither! Haud my horse, man,' he called out to Nigel, without stopping to see to whom he had addressed himself — 'haud my naig, and help me doun out o' the saddle; deil ding your saul, sirrah, canna ye mak haste before these lazy smaiks come up? Haud the rein easy — dinna let him swerve — now, haud the stirrup; that will do, man, and now we are on *terra firma.*' So saying, without casting an eye on his assistant, gentle King Jamie, unsheathing the short, sharp hanger (*couteau de chasse*), which was the only thing approaching to a sword that he could willingly endure the sight of, drew the blade with great satisfaction across the throat of the buck, and put an end at once to its struggles and its agonies.

Lord Glenvarloch, who knew well the silvan duty which the occasion demanded, hung the bridle of the King's palfrey on the branch of a tree, and, kneeling duteously down, turned the slaughtered deer upon its back, and kept the *quarrée* in that position, while the King, too intent upon his sport to observe anything else, drew his *couteau* down the breast of the animal, *secundum artem;* and, having made a cross cut, so as to ascertain the depth of the fat upon the chest, exclaimed, in a sort of rapture, 'Three inches of white fat on the brisket! — prime — prime — as I am a crowned sinner; and deil ane o' the lazy loons in but mysell! Seven — aught — aught tines on the antlers. By G—d, a hart of aught tines, and the first of the season! Bash and Battie, blessings on the heart's-root of ye! Buss me, my bairns — buss me.' The dogs accordingly fawned upon him, licked him with bloody jaws, and soon put him in such a state that it might have seemed treason had been doing its full work upon his anointed body. 'Bide doun, with a mischief to ye — bide doun, with a wanion,' cried the King, almost overturned by the obstreperous caresses of the large stag-hounds. 'But ye are just like ither folks, gie ye an inch and ye take an ell. And wha may ye be, friend?' he said, now finding leisure to take a nearer view of Nigel, and observing what in his first emotion of silvan delight had escaped him. 'Ye are nane of our train, man. In the name of God, what the devil are ye?'

'An unfortunate man, sire,' replied Nigel.

'I dare say that,' answered the King, snappishly, 'or I wad have seen naething of you. My lieges keep a' their happiness to themselves; but let bowls row wrang wi' them, and I am sure to hear of it.'

'And to whom else can we carry our complaints but to your Majesty, who is Heaven's vicegerent over us?' answered Nigel.

'Right, man, right — very weel spoken,' said the King; 'but you should leave Heaven's vicegerent some quiet on earth, too.'

'If your Majesty will look on me,' for hitherto the King had been so busy, first with the dogs, and then with the mystic operation of 'breaking,' in vulgar phrase, cutting up, the deer, that he had scarce given his assistant above a transient glance, 'you will see whom necessity makes bold to avail himself of an opportunity which may never again occur.'

King James looked; his blood left his cheek, though it continued stained with that of the animal which lay at his feet, he dropped the knife from his hand, cast behind him a faltering eye, as if he either meditated flight or looked out for assistance, and then exclaimed — 'Glenvarlochides! as sure as I was christened James Stuart. Here is a bonny spot of work, and me alone, and on foot too!' he added, bustling to get upon his horse.

'Forgive me that I interrupt you, my liege,' said

Nigel, placing himself between the King and the steed; 'hear me but a moment!'

'I'll hear ye best on horseback,' said the King. 'I canna hear a word on foot, man — not a word; and it is not seemly to stand cheek-for-chowl confronting us that gate. Bide out of our gate, sir, we charge you on your allegiance. The deil 's in them a', what can they be doing?'

'By the crown which you wear, my liege,' said Nigel, 'and for which my ancestors have worthily fought, I conjure you to be composed, and to hear me but a moment!'

That which he asked was entirely out of the monarch's power to grant. The timidity which he showed was not the plain downright cowardice which, like a natural impulse, compels a man to flight, and which can excite little but pity or contempt, but a much more ludicrous, as well as more mingled, sensation. The poor king was frightened at once and angry, desirous of securing his safety, and at the same time ashamed to compromise his dignity; so that, without attending to what Lord Glenvarloch endeavoured to explain, he kept making at his horse, and repeating, 'We are a free king, man — we are a free king; we will not be controlled by a subject. In the name of God, what keeps Steenie? And, praised be His name! they are coming. Hillo, ho — here, here — Steenie, Steenie!'

The Duke of Buckingham galloped up, followed by several courtiers and attendants of the royal chase, and commenced with his usual familiarity — 'I see Fortune has graced our dear dad, as usual. But what 's this?'

'What is it? It is treason for what I ken,' said the

King; 'and a' your wyte, Steenie. Your dear dad and gossip might have been murdered, for what you care.'

'Murdered! Secure the villain!' exclaimed the Duke. 'By Heaven, it is Olifaunt himself!' A dozen of the hunters dismounted at once, letting their horses run wild through the Park. Some seized roughly on Lord Glenvarloch, who thought it folly to offer resistance, while others busied themselves with the King. 'Are you wounded, my liege — are you wounded?'

'Not that I ken of,' said the King, in the paroxysm of his apprehension, which, by the way, might be pardoned in one of so timorous a temper, and who, in his time, had been exposed to so many strange attempts — 'not that I ken of; but search him — search him. I am sure I saw firearms under his cloak. I am sure I smelled powder — I am dooms sure of that.'

Lord Glenvarloch's cloak being stripped off, and his pistols discovered, a shout of wonder and of execration on the supposed criminal purpose arose from the crowd now thickening every moment. Not that celebrated pistol which, though resting on a bosom as gallant and as loyal as Nigel's, spread such causeless alarm among knights and dames at a late high solemnity — not that very pistol caused more temporary consternation than was so groundlessly excited by the arms which were taken from Lord Glenvarloch's person; and not Mhic-Allastar-More himself could repel with greater scorn and indignation the insinuations that they were worn for any sinister purposes.[1]

'Away with the wretch — the parricide — the bloody-minded villain!' was echoed on all hands; and the King, who naturally enough set the same value on his own life at which it was, or seemed to be, rated by others, cried out, louder than all the rest, 'Ay — ay, away with him. I have had enough of him, and so has the country. But do him no bodily harm; and, for God's sake, sirs, if ye are sure that ye have thoroughly disarmed him, put up your swords, dirks, and skenes, for you will certainly do each other a mischief.'

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[1] See Note 4.

There was a speedy sheathing of weapons at the King's command; for those who had hitherto been brandishing them in loyal bravado began thereby to call to mind the extreme dislike which his Majesty nourished against naked steel — a foible which seemed to be as constitutional as his timidity, and was usually ascribed to the brutal murder of Rizzio having been perpetrated in his unfortunate mother's presence before he yet saw the light.

At this moment, the Prince, who had been hunting in a different part of the then extensive Park, and had received some hasty and confused information of what was going forward, came rapidly up, with one or two noblemen in his train, and amongst others Lord Dalgarno. He sprang from his horse, and asked eagerly if his father were wounded.

'Not that I am sensible of, Baby Charles; but a wee matter exhausted, with struggling single-handed with the assassin. Steenie, fill us a cup of wine — the leathern bottle is hanging at our pommel. Buss me, then, Baby Charles,' continued the monarch, after he had taken this cup of comfort.[1] 'O man, the Commonwealth and you have had a fair escape from the heavy and bloody loss of a dear father; for we are *pater patriæ* as weel as *paterfamilias. Quis desiderio sit pudor aut modus tam cari capitis!* Woe is me, black cloth would have been dear in England, and dry een scarce!'

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[1] See Note 5.

And, at the very idea of the general grief which must have attended his death, the good-natured monarch cried heartily himself.

'Is this possible?' said Charles, sternly; for his pride was hurt at his father's demeanour on the one hand, while, on the other, he felt the resentment of a son and a subject at the supposed attempt on the King's life. 'Let some one speak who has seen what happened. My Lord of Buckingham!'

'I cannot say, my lord,' replied the Duke, 'that I saw any actual violence offered to his Majesty, else I should have avenged him on the spot.'

'You would have done wrong, then, in your zeal, George,' answered the Prince; 'such offenders were better left to be dealt with by the laws. But was the villain not struggling with his Majesty?'

'I cannot term it so, my lord,' said the Duke, who, with many faults, would have disdained an untruth. 'He seemed to desire to detain his Majesty, who, on the contrary, appeared to wish to mount his horse; but they have found pistols on his person, contrary to the proclamation, and, as it proves to be Nigel Olifaunt, of whose ungoverned disposition your Royal Highness has seen some samples, we seem to be justified in apprehending the worst.'

'Nigel Olifaunt!' said the Prince; 'can that unhappy man so soon have engaged in a new trespass? Let me see those pistols.'

'Ye are not so unwise as to meddle with such snaphaunces, Baby Charles?' said James. 'Do not give him them, Steenie — I command you on your allegiance. They may go off of their own accord, whilk often befalls. You will do it, then? Saw ever man sic wilful bairns as we are cumbered with! Havena we guardsmen and soldiers enow, but you must unload the weapons yoursell — you, the heir of our body and dignities, and sae mony men around that are paid for venturing life in our cause?'

But, without regarding his father's exclamations, Prince Charles, with the obstinacy which characterised him in trifles as well as matters of consequence, persisted in unloading the pistols with his own hand of the double bullets with which each was charged. The hands of all around were held up in astonishment at the horror of the crime supposed to have been intended, and the escape which was presumed so narrow.

Nigel had not yet spoken a word; he now calmly desired to be heard.

'To what purpose?' answered the Prince, coldly. 'You knew yourself accused of a heavy offence, and, instead of rendering yourself up to justice, in terms of the proclamation, you are here found intruding yourself on his Majesty's presence, and armed with unlawful weapons.'

'May it please you, sir,' answered Nigel, 'I wore these unhappy weapons for my own defence; and not very many hours since they were necessary to protect the lives of others.'

'Doubtless, my lord,' answered the Prince, still calm and unmoved, 'your late mode of life, and the associates with whom you have lived, have made you familiar with scenes and weapons of violence. But it is not to me you are to plead your cause.'

'Hear me — hear me, noble prince!' said Nigel, eagerly. 'Hear me! You — even you yourself — may one day ask to be heard, and in vain.'

'How, sir,' said the Prince, haughtily — 'how am I to construe that, my lord?'

'If not on earth, sir,' replied the prisoner, 'yet to Heaven we must all pray for patient and favourable audience.'

'True, my lord,' said the Prince, bending his head with haughty acquiescence; 'nor would I now refuse such audience to you, could it avail you. But you shall suffer no wrong. We will ourselves look into your case.'

'Ay — ay,' answered the King, 'he hath made *appellatio ad Cæsarem:* we will interrogate Glenvarlochides ourselves, time and place fitting; and, in the mean while, have him and his weapons away, for I am weary of the sight of them.'

In consequence of directions hastily given, Nigel was accordingly removed from the presence, where, however, his words had not altogether fallen to the ground.[1] 'This is a most strange matter, George,' said the Prince to the favourite; 'this gentleman hath a good countenance, a happy presence, and much calm firmness in his look and speech. I cannot think he would attempt a crime so desperate and useless.'

'I profess neither love nor favour to the young man,' answered Buckingham, whose high-spirited ambition bore always an open character; 'but I cannot but agree with your Highness, that our dear gossip hath been something hasty in apprehending personal danger from him.'[1]

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[1] See Note 6.

'By my saul, Steenie, ye are not blate, to say so!' said the King. 'Do I not ken the smell of pouther, think ye? Who else nosed out the Fifth of November, save our royal selves? Cecil, and Suffolk, and all of them were at fault, like sae mony mongrel tykes, when I puzzled it out; and trow ye that I cannot smell pouther? Why, 'sblood, man, Joannes Barclaius thought my ingine was in some measure inspiration, and terms his history of the plot *Series patefacti divinitus parricidii;* and Spondanus, in like manner, saith of us, *Divinitus evasit.*'

'The land was happy in your Majesty's escape,' said the Duke of Buckingham, 'and not less in the quick wit which tracked the labyrinth of treason by so fine and almost invisible a clue.'

'Saul, man, Steenie, ye are right! There are few youths have sic true judgment as you respecting the wisdom of their elders; and as for this fause, traitorous smaik, I doubt he is a hawk of the same nest. Saw ye not something Papistical about him? Let them look that he bears not a crucifix or some sic Roman trinket about him.'

'It would ill become me to attempt the exculpation of this unhappy man,' said Lord Dalgarno, 'considering the height of his present attempt, which has made all true men's blood curdle in their veins. Yet I cannot avoid intimating, with all due submission to his Majesty's infallible judgment, in justice to one who showed himself formerly only my enemy, though he now displays himself in much blacker colours, that this Olifaunt always appeared to me more as a Puritan than as a Papist.'

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[1] See Note 7.

'Ah, Dalgarno, art thou there, man?' said the King. 'And ye behoved to keep back, too, and leave us to our own natural strength and the care of Providence when we were in grips with the villain!'

'Providence, may it please your most gracious Majesty, would not fail to aid, in such a strait, the care of three weeping kingdoms,' said Lord Dalgarno.

'Surely, man — surely,' replied the King; 'but a sight of your father, with his long whinyard, would have been a blythe matter a short while syne; and in future we will aid the ends of Providence in our favour by keeping near us two stout beef-eaters of the guard. And so this Olifaunt is a Puritan? not the less like to be a Papist for all that, for extremities meet, as the scholiast proveth. There are, as I have proved in my book, Puritans of Papistical principles: it is just a new tout on an auld horn.'

Here the King was reminded by the Prince, who dreaded perhaps that he was going to recite the whole 'Basilicon Doron,' that it would be best to move towards the palace, and consider what was to be done for satisfying the public mind, in whom the morning's adventure was likely to excite much speculation. As they entered the gate of the palace, a female bowed and presented a paper, which the King received, and, with a sort of groan, thrust it into his side pocket. The Prince expressed some curiosity to know its contents. 'The valet in waiting will tell you them,' said the King, 'when I strip off my cassock. D' ye think, Baby, that I can read all that is thrust into my hands? See to me, man (he pointed to the pockets of his great trunk breeches, which were stuffed with papers). We are like an ass — that we should so speak! — stooping betwixt two burdens. Ay— ay, *Asinus fortis accumbens inter terminos*, as the Vulgate hath it. Ay, ay, *Vidi terram quod esset optima, et supposui humerum ad portandum, et factus sum tributis serviens*— I saw this land of England, and became an overburdened king thereof.'

'You are indeed well loaded, my dear dad and gossip,' said the Duke of Buckingham, receiving the papers which King James emptied out of his pockets.

'Ay — ay,' continued the monarch; 'take them to you *per aversionem*, bairns — the one pouch stuffed with petitions, t' other with pasquinadoes; a fine time we have on 't. On my conscience, I believe the tale of Cadmus was hieroglyphical, and that the dragon's teeth whilk he sowed were the letters he invented. Ye are laughing, Baby Charles? Mind what I say. When I came here first frae our ain country, where the men are as rude as the weather, by my conscience, England was a bieldy bit: one would have thought the King had little to do but to walk by quiet waters — *per aquam refectionis*. But, I kenna how or why, the place is sair changed — read that libel upon us and on our regimen. The dragon's teeth are sown, Baby Charles; I pray God they bearna their armed harvest in your day, if I suld not live to see it. God forbid I should, for there will be an awful day's kemping at the shearing of them.'

'I shall know how to stifle the crop in the blade — ha, George?' said the Prince, turning to the favourite with a look expressive of some contempt for his father's apprehensions, and full of confidence in the superior firmness and decision of his own counsels.

While this discourse was passing, Nigel, in charge of a pursuivant-at-arms, was pushed and dragged through the small town, all the inhabitants of which, having been alarmed by the report of an attack on the King's life, now pressed forward to see the supposed traitor. Amid the confusion of the moment, he could descry the face of the victualler, arrested into a stare of stolid wonder, and that of the barber grinning betwixt horror and eager curiosity. He thought that he also had a glimpse of his waterman in the green jacket.

He had no time for remarks, being placed in a boat with the pursuivant and two yeomen of the guard, and rowed up the river as fast as the arms of six stout watermen could pull against the tide. They passed the groves of masts which even then astonished the stranger with the extended commerce of London, and now approached those low and blackened walls of curtain and bastion which exhibit here and there a piece of ordnance, and here and there a solitary sentinel under arms, but have otherwise so little of the military terrors of a citadel. A projecting low-browed arch, which had loured over many an innocent and many a guilty head, in similar circumstances, now spread its dark frowns over that of Nigel.[1] The boat was put close up to the broad steps against which the tide was lapping its lazy wave. The warder on duty looked from the wicket, and spoke to the pursuivant in whispers. In a few minutes the lieutenant of the Tower appeared, received, and granted an acknowledgment for the body of Nigel Lord Glenvarloch.

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[1] See Note 8.

CHAPTER XXVIII

Ye towers of Julius! London's lasting shame;
With many a foul and midnight murder fed!

GRAY.

SUCH is the exclamation of Gray. Bandello, long before him, has said something like it; and the same sentiment must, in some shape or other, have frequently occurred to those who, remembering the fate of other captives in that memorable state prison, may have had but too much reason to anticipate their own. The dark and low arch, which seemed, like the entrance to Dante's Hell, to forbid hope of regress; the muttered sounds of the warders, and petty formalities observed in opening and shutting the grated wicket; the cold and constrained salutation of the lieutenant of the fortress, who showed his prisoner that distant and measured respect which authority pays as a tax to decorum — all struck upon Nigel's heart, impressing on him the cruel consciousness of captivity.

'I am a prisoner,' he said, the words escaping from him almost unawares — 'I am a prisoner, and in the Tower!'

The lieutenant bowed. 'And it is my duty,' he said, 'to show your lordship your chamber, where, I am compelled to say, my orders are to place you under some restraint. I will make it as easy as my duty permits.'

Nigel only bowed in return to this compliment, and followed the lieutenant to the ancient buildings on the western side of the parade, and adjoining to the chapel, used in those days as a state prison, but in ours as the mess-room of the officers of the guard upon duty at the fortress. The double doors were unlocked; the prisoner ascended a few steps, followed by the lieutenant and a warder of the higher class. They entered a large, but irregular, low-roofed, and dark apartment, exhibiting a very scanty proportion of furniture. The warder had orders to light a fire and attend to Lord Glenvarloch's commands in all things consistent with his duty; and the lieutenant, having made his reverence with the customary compliment that, 'He trusted his lordship would not long remain under his guardianship,' took his leave.

Nigel would have asked some questions of the warder, who remained to put the apartment into order, but the man had caught the spirit of his office. He seemed not to hear some of the prisoner's questions, though of the most ordinary kind, did not reply to others, and when he did speak, it was in a short and sullen tone, which, though not positively disrespectful, was such as at least to encourage no further communication.

Nigel left him, therefore, to do his work in silence, and proceeded to amuse himself with the melancholy task of deciphering the names, mottoes, verses, and hieroglyphics with which his predecessors in captivity had covered the walls of their prison-house. There he saw the names of many a forgotten sufferer, mingled with others which will continue in remembrance until English history shall perish. There were the pious effusions of the devout Catholic, poured forth on the eve of his sealing his profession at Tyburn, mingled with those of the firm Protestant, about to feed the fires of Smithfield. There the slender hand of the unfortunate Jane Grey, whose fate was to draw tears from future generations, might be contrasted with the bolder touch which impressed deep on the walls the bear and ragged staff, the proud emblem of the proud Dudleys. It was like the roll of the prophet, a record of lamentation and mourning, and yet not unmixed with brief interjections of resignation, and sentences expressive of the firmest resolutions.[1]

In the sad task of examining the miseries of his predecessors in captivity, Lord Glenvarloch was interrupted by the sudden opening of the door of his prison-room. It was the warder, who came to inform him that, by order of the lieutenant of the Tower, his lordship was to have the society and attendance of a fellow-prisoner in his place of confinement. Nigel replied hastily, that he wished no attendance, and would rather be left alone; but the warder gave him to understand, with a kind of grumbling civility, that the lieutenant was the best judge how his prisoners should be accommodated, and that he would have no trouble with the boy, who was such a slip of a thing as was scarce worth turning a key upon. 'There, Giles,' he said, 'bring the child in.'

Another warder put the 'lad before him' into the room, and, both withdrawing, bolt crashed and chain clanged as they replaced these ponderous obstacles to freedom. The boy was clad in a grey suit of the finest cloth, laid down with silver lace, with a buff-coloured cloak of the same pattern. His cap, which was a montero of black velvet, was pulled over his brows and, with the profusion of his long ringlets, almost concealed his

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[1] See Note 9.

The Tower of London

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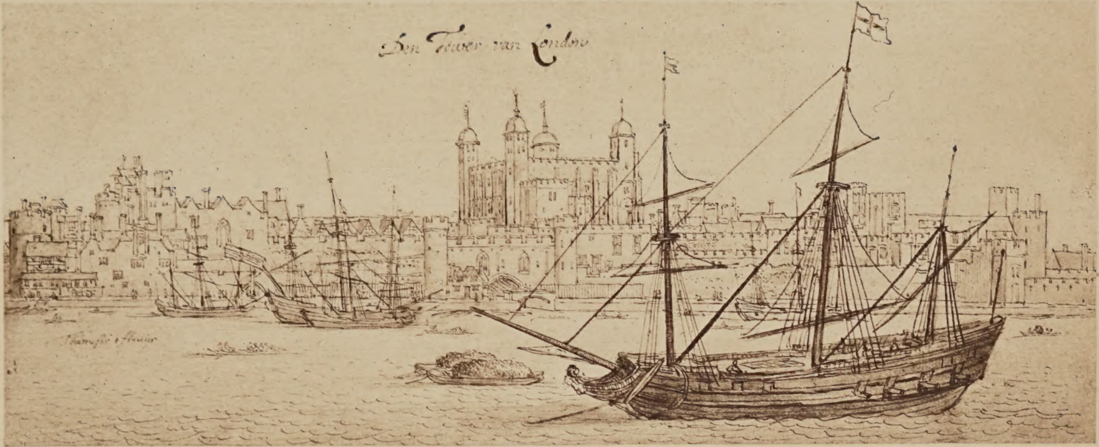
Den Tower van London
Thamesis fluuius

face. He stood on the very spot where the warder had quitted his collar, about two steps from the door of the apartment, his eyes fixed on the ground, and every joint trembling with confusion and terror. Nigel could well have dispensed with his society, but it was not in his nature to behold distress, whether of body or mind, without endeavouring to relieve it.

'Cheer up,' he said, 'my pretty lad. We are to be companions, it seems, for a little time — at least I trust your confinement will be short, since you are too young to have done aught to deserve long restraint. Come — come, do not be discouraged. Your hand is cold and trembles, the air is warm too — but it may be the damp of this darksome room. Place you by the fire. What! weeping-ripe, my little man? I pray you, do not be a child. You have no beard yet, to be dishonoured by your tears, but yet you should not cry like a girl. Think you are only shut up for playing truant, and you can pass a day without weeping, surely.'

The boy suffered himself to be led and seated by the fire, but, after retaining for a long time the very posture which he assumed in sitting down, he suddenly changed it in order to wring his hands with an air of the bitterest distress, and then, spreading them before his face, wept so plentifully that the tears found their way in floods through his slender fingers.

Nigel was in some degree rendered insensible to his own situation by his feelings for the intense agony by which so young and beautiful a creature seemed to be utterly overwhelmed; and, sitting down close beside the boy, he applied the most soothing terms which occurred, to endeavour to alleviate his distress; and, with an action which the difference of their age rendered natural, drew his hand kindly along the long hair of the disconsolate child. The lad appeared so shy as even to shrink from this slight approach to familiarity; yet, when Lord Glenvarloch, perceiving and allowing for his timidity, sat down on the farther side of the fire, he appeared to be more at his ease, and to hearken with some apparent interest to the arguments which from time to time Nigel used, to introduce him to moderate, at least, the violence of his grief. As the boy listened, his tears, though they continued to flow freely, seemed to escape from their source more easily, his sobs were less convulsive, and became gradually changed into low sighs, which succeeded each other, indicating as much sorrow, perhaps, but less alarm, than his first transports had shown.

'Tell me who and what you are, my pretty boy,' said Nigel. 'Consider me, child, as a companion, who wishes to be kind to you, would you but teach him how he can be so.'

'Sir — my lord, I mean,' answered the boy, very timidly, and in a voice which could scarce be heard even across the brief distance which divided them, 'you are very good — and I — am very unhappy —'

A second fit of tears interrupted what else he had intended to say, and it required a renewal of Lord Glenvarloch's good-natured expostulations and encouragements to bring him once more to such composure as rendered the lad capable of expressing himself intelligibly. At length, however, he was able to say — 'I am sensible of your goodness, my lord, and grateful for it; but I am a poor, unhappy creature, and, what is worse, have myself only to thank for my misfortunes.'

'We are seldom absolutely miserable, my young acquaintance,' said Nigel, 'without being ourselves more or less responsible for it. I may well say so, otherwise I had not been here to-day; but you are very young, and can have but little to answer for.'

'O sir! I wish I could say so. I have been self-willed and obstinate — and rash and ungovernable — and now — now, how dearly do I pay the price of it!'

'Pshaw, my boy,' replied Nigel; 'this must be some childish frolic — some breaking out of bounds — some truant trick. And yet how should any of these have brought you to the Tower? There is something mysterious about you, young man, which I must inquire into.'

'Indeed — indeed, my lord, there is no harm about me,' said the boy, more moved, it would seem, to confession by the last words, by which he seemed considerably alarmed, than by all the kind expostulations and arguments which Nigel had previously used. 'I am innocent — that is, I have done wrong, but nothing to deserve being in this frightful place.'

'Tell me the truth, then,' said Nigel, in a tone in which command mingled with encouragement; 'you have nothing to fear from me, and as little to hope, perhaps; yet, placed as I am, I would know with whom I speak.'

'With an unhappy — boy, sir — and idle and truantly disposed, as your lordship said,' answered the lad, looking up and showing a countenance in which paleness and blushes succeeded each other, as fear and shamefacedness alternately had influence. 'I left my father's house without leave, to see the King hunt in the Park at Greenwich; there came a cry of "Treason," and all the gates were shut. I was frightened, and hid myself in a thicket, and I was found by some of the rangers and examined — and they said I gave no good account of myself — and so I was sent hither.'

'I am an unhappy — a most unhappy being,' said Lord Glenvarloch, rising and walking through the apartment: 'nothing approaches me but shares my own bad fate! Death and imprisonment dog my steps, and involve all who are found near me. Yet this boy's story sounds strangely. You say you were examined, my young friend. Let me pray you to say whether you told your name, and your means of gaining admission into the Park; if so, they surely would not have detained you?'

'O my lord,' said the boy, 'I took care not to tell them the name of the friend that let me in; and as to my father — I would not he knew where I now am for all the wealth in London!'

'But you do not expect,' said Nigel, 'that they will dismiss you till you let them know who and what you are?'

'What good will it do them to keep so useless a creature as myself?' said the boy; 'they must let me go, were it but out of shame.'

'Do not trust to that. Tell me your name and station; I will communicate them to the lieutenant; he is a man of quality and honour, and will not only be willing to procure your liberation, but also, I have no doubt, will intercede with your father. I am partly answerable for such poor aid as I can afford, to get you out of this embarrassment, since I occasioned the alarm owing to which you were arrested; so tell me your name and your father's name.'

'My name to *you?* O never — never!' answered the boy, in a tone of deep emotion, the cause of which Nigel could not comprehend.

'Are you so much afraid of me, young man,' he replied, 'because I am here accused and a prisoner? Consider, a man may be both and deserve neither suspicion nor restraint. Why should you distrust me? You seem friendless, and I am myself so much in the same circumstances that I cannot but pity your situation when I reflect on my own. Be wise; I have spoken kindly to you, I mean as kindly as I speak.'

'O, I doubt it not — I doubt it not, my lord,' said the boy, 'and I could tell you all — that is, almost all.'

'Tell me nothing, my young friend, excepting what may assist me in being useful to you,' said Nigel.

'You are generous, my lord,' said the boy; 'and I am sure — O sure, I might safely trust to your honour. But yet — but yet — I am so sore beset. I have been so rash, so unguarded — I can never tell you of my folly. Besides, I have already told too much to one whose heart I thought I had moved — yet I find myself here.'

'To whom did you make this disclosure?' said Nigel.

'I dare not tell,' replied the youth.

'There is something singular about you, my young friend,' said Lord Glenvarloch, withdrawing with a gentle degree of compulsion the hand with which the boy had again covered his eyes; 'do not pain yourself with thinking of your situation just at present. Your pulse is high, and your hand feverish; lay yourself on yonder pallet, and try to compose yourself to sleep. It is the readiest and best remedy for the fancies with which you are worrying yourself.'

'I thank you for your considerate kindness, my lord,' said the boy; 'with your leave, I will remain for a little space quiet in this chair: I am better thus than on the couch. I can think undisturbedly on what I have done, and have still to do; and if God sends slumber to a creature so exhausted, it shall be most welcome.'

So saying, the boy drew his hand from Lord Nigel's, and, drawing around him and partly over his face the folds of his ample cloak, he resigned himself to sleep or meditation, while his companion, notwithstanding the exhausting scenes of this and the preceding day, continued his pensive walk up and down the apartment.

Every reader has experienced that times occur when, far from being lord of external circumstances, man is unable to rule even the wayward realm of his own thoughts. It was Nigel's natural wish to consider his own situation coolly, and fix on the course which it became him as a man of sense and courage to adopt; and yet, in spite of himself, and notwithstanding the deep interest of the critical state in which he was placed, it did so happen that his fellow-prisoner's situation occupied more of his thoughts than did his own. There was no accounting for this wandering of the imagination, but also there was no striving with it. The pleading tones of one of the sweetest voices he had ever heard still rung in his ear, though it seemed that sleep had now fettered the tongue of the speaker. He drew near on tiptoe to satisfy himself whether it were so. The folds of the cloak hid the lower part of his face entirely; but the bonnet, which had fallen a little aside, permitted him to see the forehead streaked with blue veins, the closed eyes, and the long silken eyelashes.

'Poor child,' said Nigel to himself, as he looked on him, nestled up as it were in the folds of his mantle, 'the dew is yet on thy eyelashes, and thou hast fairly wept thyself asleep. Sorrow is a rough nurse to one so young and delicate as thou art. Peace be to thy slumbers, I will not disturb them. My own misfortunes require my attention, and it is to their contemplation that I must resign myself.'

He attempted to do so, but was crossed at every turn by conjectures which intruded themselves as before, and which all regarded the sleeper rather than himself. He was angry and vexed, and expostulated with himself concerning the overweening interest which he took in the concerns of one of whom he knew nothing, saving that the boy was forced into his company, perhaps as a spy, by those to whose custody he was committed; but the spell could not be broken, and the thoughts which he struggled to dismiss continued to haunt him.

Thus passed half an hour or more; at the conclusion of which the harsh sound of the revolving bolts was again heard, and the voice of the warder announced that a man desired to speak with Lord Glenvarloch. 'A man to speak with me, under my present circumstances! Who can it be?' And John Christie, his landlord of Paul's Wharf, resolved his doubts by entering the apartment.

'Welcome — most welcome, mine honest landlord!' said Lord Glenvarloch. 'How could I have dreamt of seeing you in my present close lodgings?' And at the same time, with the frankness of old kindness, he walked up to Christie and offered his hand; but John started back as from the look of a basilisk.

'Keep your courtesies to yourself, my lord,' said he, gruffly; 'I have had as many of them already as may serve me for my life.'

'Why, Master Christie,' said Nigel, 'what means this? I trust I have not offended you?'

'Ask me no questions, my lord,' said Christie, bluntly. 'I am a man of peace: I came not hither to wrangle with you at this place and season. Just suppose that I am well informed of all the obligements from your honour's nobleness, and then acquaint me, in as few words as may be, where is the unhappy woman. What have you done with her?'

'What have I done with her!' said Lord Glenvarloch. 'Done with whom? I know not what you are speaking of.'

'O yes, my lord,' said Christie; 'play surprise as well as you will, you must have some guess that I am speaking of the poor fool that was my wife, till she became your lordship's light o' love.'

'Your wife! Has your wife left you? and, if she has, do you come to ask her of me?'

'Yes, my lord, singular as it may seem,' returned Christie, in a tone of bitter irony, and with a sort of grin widely discording from the discomposure of his features, the gleam of his eye, and the froth which stood on his lip, 'I do come to make that demand of your lordship. Doubtless, you are surprised I should take the trouble; but, I cannot tell, great men and little men think differently. She has lain in my bosom and drunk of my cup, and, such as she is, I cannot forget that, though I will never see her again; she must not starve, my lord, or do worse to gain bread, though I reckon your lordship may think I am robbing the public in trying to change her courses.'

'By my faith as a Christian, by my honour as a gentleman,' said Lord Glenvarloch, 'if aught amiss has chanced with your wife, I know nothing of it. I trust in Heaven you are as much mistaken in imputing guilt to her as in supposing me her partner in it.'

'Fie! fie! my lord,' said Christie, 'why will you make it so tough? She is but the wife of a clod-pated old chandler, who was idiot enough to marry a wench twenty years younger than himself. Your lordship cannot have more glory by it than you have had already; and, as for advantage and solace, I take it Dame Nelly is now unnecessary to your gratification. I should be sorry to interrupt the course of your pleasure: an old wittol should have more consideration of his condition. But, your precious lordship being mewed up here among other choice jewels of the kingdom, Dame Nelly cannot, I take it, be admitted to share the hours of dalliance which—' Here the incensed husband stammered, broke off his tone of irony, and proceeded, striking his staff against the ground— 'O that these false limbs of yours, which I wish had been hamstrung when they first crossed my honest threshold, were free from the fetters they have well deserved! I would give you the odds of your youth, and your weapon, and would bequeath my soul to the foul fiend if I, with this piece of oak, did not make you such an example to all ungrateful, pick-thank courtiers that it should be a proverb to the end of time how John Christie swaddled his wife's fine leman!'

'I understand not your insolence,' said Nigel, 'but I forgive it, because you labour under some strange delusion. In so far as I can comprehend your vehement charge, it is entirely undeserved on my part. You seem to impute to me the seduction of your wife; I trust she is innocent. For me, at least, she is as innocent as an angel in bliss. I never thought of her— never touched her hand or cheek, save in honourable courtesy.'

'O ay — courtesy! that is the very word. She always praised your lordship's *honourable courtesy*. Ye have cozened me between ye, with your courtesy. My lord — my lord, you came to us no very wealthy man, you know it. It was for no lucre of gain I took you and your swashbuckler, your Don Diego yonder, under my poor roof. I never cared if the little room were let or no: I could live without it. If you could not have paid for it, you should never have been asked. All the wharf knows John Christie has the means and spirit to do a kindness. When you first darkened my honest doorway, I was as happy as a man need to be, who is no youngster, and has the rheumatism. Nelly was the kindest and best-humoured wench — we might have a word now and then about a gown or a ribbon, but a kinder soul on the whole, and a more careful, considering her years, till you came — and what is she now! But I will not be a fool to cry, if I can help it. *What* she is, is not the question, but *where* she is; and that I must learn, sir, of you.'

'How can you, when I tell you,' replied Nigel, 'that I am as ignorant as yourself, or rather much more so? Till this moment, I never heard of any disagreement betwixt your dame and you.'

'That is a lie,' said John Christie, bluntly.

'How, you base villain!' said Lord Glenvarloch, 'do you presume on my situation? if it were not that I hold you mad, and perhaps made so by some wrong sustained, you should find my being weaponless were no protection: I would beat your brains out against the wall.'

'Ay — ay,' answered Christie, 'bully as ye list. Ye have been at the ordinaries, and in Alsatia, and learned the ruffian's rant, I doubt not. But I repeat, you have spoken an untruth, when you said you knew not of my wife's falsehood; for, when you were twitted with it among your gay mates, it was a common jest among you, and your lordship took all the credit they would give you for your gallantry and gratitude.'

There was a mixture of truth in this part of the charge which disconcerted Lord Glenvarloch exceedingly; for he could not, as a man of honour, deny that Lord Dalgarno and others had occasionally jested with him on the subject of Dame Nelly, and that, though he had not played exactly *le fanfaron des vices qu'il n'avoit pas*, he had not at least been sufficiently anxious to clear himself of the suspicion of such a crime to men who considered it as a merit. It was therefore with some hesitation, and in a sort of qualifying tone, that he admitted that some idle jests had passed upon such a supposition, although without the least foundation in truth.

John Christie would not listen to his vindication any longer. 'By your own account,' he said, 'you permitted lies to be told of you in jest. How do I know you are speaking truth, now you are serious? You thought it, I suppose, a fine thing to wear the reputation of having dishonoured an honest family; who will not think that you had real grounds for your base bravado to rest upon? I will not believe otherwise for one, and therefore, my lord, mark what I have to say. You are now yourself in trouble. As you hope to come through it safely, and without loss of life and property, tell me where this unhappy woman is. Tell me, if you hope for Heaven; tell me, if you fear Hell; tell me, as you would not have the curse of an utterly ruined woman and a broken-hearted man attend you through life, and bear witness against you at the Great Day which shall come after death. You are moved, my lord, I see it. I cannot forget the wrong you have done me. I cannot even promise to forgive it; but — tell me, and you shall never see me again, or hear of my reproaches.'

'Unfortunate man,' said Lord Glenvarloch, 'you have said more — far more than enough to move me deeply. Were I at liberty, I would lend you my best aid to search out him who has wronged you, the rather that I do suspect my having been your lodger has been in some degree the remote cause of bringing the spoiler into the sheepfold.'

'I am glad your lordship grants me so much,' said John Christie, resuming the tone of embittered irony with which he had opened the singular conversation; 'I will spare you further reproach and remonstrance; your mind is made up, and so is mine. So ho, warder!' The warder entered, and John went on — 'I want to get out, brother. Look well to your charge: it were better that half the wild beasts in their dens yonder were turned loose upon Tower Hill than that this same smooth-faced, civil-spoken gentleman were again returned to honest men's company!'

So saying, he hastily left the apartment; and Nigel had full leisure to lament the waywardness of his fate, which seemed never to tire of persecuting him for crimes of which he was innocent, and investing him with the appearances of guilt which his mind abhorred. He could not, however, help acknowledging to himself that all the pain which he might sustain from the present accusation of John Christie was so far deserved, from his having suffered himself, out of vanity, or rather an unwillingness to encounter ridicule, to be supposed capable of a base inhospitable crime, merely because fools called it an affair of gallantry; and it was no balsam to the wound, when he recollected what Richie had told him of his having been ridiculed behind his back by the gallants of the ordinary for affecting the reputation of an intrigue which he had not in reality spirit enough to have carried on. His simulation had, in a word, placed him in the unlucky predicament of being rallied as a braggart amongst the dissipated youths, with whom the reality of the amour would have given him credit; whilst, on the other hand, he was branded as an inhospitable seducer by the injured husband, who was obstinately persuaded of his guilt.

CHAPTER XXIX

How fares the man on whom good men would look
With eyes where scorn and censure combated,
But that kind Christian love hath taught the lesson —
That they who merit most contempt and hate
Do most deserve our pity.

Old Play.

It might have seemed natural that the visit of John Christie should have entirely diverted Nigel's attention from his slumbering companion, and, for a time, such was the immediate effect of the chain of new ideas which the incident introduced; yet, soon after the injured man had departed, Lord Glenvarloch began to think it extraordinary that the boy should have slept so soundly while they talked loudly in his vicinity. Yet he certainly did not appear to have stirred. Was he well — was he only feigning sleep? He went close to him to make his observations, and perceived that he had wept, and was still weeping, though his eyes were closed. He touched him gently on the shoulder; the boy shrunk from his touch, but did not awake. He pulled him harder, and asked him if he was sleeping.

'Do they waken folk in your country to know whether they are asleep or no?' said the boy, in a peevish tone.

'No, my young sir,' answered Nigel; 'but when they weep in the manner you do in your sleep, they awaken them to see what ails them.'

'It signifies little to any one what ails me,' said the boy.

'True,' replied Lord Glenvarloch; 'but you knew before you went to sleep how little I could assist you in your difficulties, and you seemed disposed, notwithstanding, to put some confidence in me.'

'If I did, I have changed my mind,' said the lad.

'And what has occasioned this change of mind, I trow?' said Lord Glenvarloch. 'Some men speak through their sleep; perhaps you have the gift of hearing in it.'

'No, but the Patriarch Joseph never dreamt truer dreams than I do.'

'Indeed!' said Lord Glenvarloch. 'And, pray, what have you had that has deprived me of your good opinion; for that, I think, seems the moral of the matter.'

'You shall judge yourself,' answered the boy. 'I dreamed I was in a wild forest, where there was a cry of hounds, and winding of horns, exactly as I heard in Greenwich Park.'

'That was because you were in the Park this morning, you simple child,' said Nigel.

'Stay, my lord,' said the youth. 'I went on in my dream, till, at the top of a broad green alley, I saw a noble stag which had fallen into the toils; and methought I knew that he was the very stag which the whole party were hunting, and that, if the chase came up, the dogs would tear him to pieces, or the hunters would cut his throat; and I had pity on the gallant stag, and though I was of a different kind from him, and though I was somewhat afraid of him, I thought I would venture something to free so stately a creature; and I pulled out my knife, and just as I was beginning to cut the meshes of the net, the animal started up in my face in the likeness of a tiger, much larger and fiercer than any you may have seen in the ward of the wild beasts yonder, and was just about to tear me limb from limb when you awaked me.'

'Methinks,' said Nigel, 'I deserved more thanks than I have got for rescuing you from such a danger by waking you. But, my pretty master, methinks all this tale of a tiger and a stag has little to do with your change of temper towards me.'

'I know not whether it has or no,' said the lad; 'but I will not tell you who I am.'

'You will keep your secret to yourself then, peevish boy,' said Nigel, turning from him, and resuming his walk through the room; then stopping suddenly, he said, 'And yet you shall not escape from me without knowing that I penetrate your mystery.'

'My mystery!' said the youth, at once alarmed and irritated. 'What mean you, my lord?'

'Only that I can read your dream without the assistance of a Chaldean interpreter, and my exposition is — that my fair companion does not wear the dress of her sex.'

'And if I do not, my lord,' said his companion, hastily starting up and folding her cloak tight around her, 'my dress, such as it is, covers one who will not disgrace it.'

'Many would call that speech a fair challenge,' said Lord Glenvarloch, looking on her fixedly; 'women do not masquerade in men's clothes to make use of men's weapons.'

'I have no such purpose,' said the seeming boy. 'I have other means of protection, and powerful; but I would first know what is *your* purpose.'

'An honourable and a most respectful one,' said Lord

Glenvarloch; 'whatever you are — whatever motive may have brought you into this ambiguous situation, I am sensible — every look, word, and action of yours makes me sensible — that you are no proper subject of importunity, far less of ill-usage. What circumstances can have forced you into so doubtful a situation, I know not; but I feel assured there is, and can be, nothing in them of premeditated wrong, which should expose you to cold-blooded insult. From me you have nothing to dread.'

'I expected nothing less from your nobleness, my lord,' answered the female; 'my adventure, though I feel it was both desperate and foolish, is not so very foolish, nor my safety here so utterly unprotected, as at first sight, and in this strange dress, it may appear to be. I have suffered enough, and more than enough, by the degradation of having been seen in this unfeminine attire, and the comments you must necessarily have made on my conduct; but I thank God that I am so far protected that I could not have been subjected to insult unavenged.'

When this extraordinary explanation had proceeded thus far, the warder appeared, to place before Lord Glenvarloch a meal which, for his present situation, might be called comfortable, and which, if not equal to the cookery of the celebrated Chevalier Beaujeu, was much superior in neatness and cleanliness to that of Alsatia. A warder attended to do the honours of the table, and made a sign to the disguised female to rise and assist him in his functions. But Nigel, declaring that he knew the youth's parents, interfered, and caused his companion to eat along with him. She consented with a sort of embarrassment which rendered her pretty features yet more interesting. Yet she maintained with a natural grace that sort of good-breeding which belongs to the table; and it seemed to Nigel, whether already prejudiced in her favour by the extraordinary circumstances of their meeting, or whether really judging from what was actually the fact, that he had seldom seen a young person comport herself with more decorous propriety, mixed with ingenuous simplicity; while the consciousness of the peculiarity of her situation threw a singular colouring over her whole demeanour, which could be neither said to be formal, nor easy, nor embarrassed, but was compounded of, and shaded with, an interchange of all these three characteristics. Wine was placed on the table, of which she could not be prevailed on to taste a glass. Their conversation was, of course, limited by the presence of the warder to the business of the table; but Nigel had, long ere the cloth was removed, formed the resolution, if possible, of making himself master of this young person's history, the more especially as he now began to think that the tones of her voice and her features were not so strange to him as he had originally supposed. This, however, was a conviction which he adopted slowly, and only as it dawned upon him from particular circumstances during the course of the repast.

At length the prison-meal was finished, and Lord Glenvarloch began to think how he might most easily enter upon the topic he meditated, when the warder announced a visitor.

'Soh!' said Nigel, something displeased, 'I find even a prison does not save one from importunate visitations.'

He prepared to receive his guest, however, while his alarmed companion flew to the large cradle-shaped chair which had first served her as a place of refuge, drew her cloak around her, and disposed herself as much as she could to avoid observation. She had scarce made her arrangements for that purpose, when the door opened, and the worthy citizen, George Heriot, entered the prison-chamber.

He cast around the apartment his usual sharp, quick glance of observation, and, advancing to Nigel, said — 'My lord, I wish I could say I was happy to see you.'

'The sight of those who are unhappy themselves, Master Heriot, seldom produces happiness to their friends. I, however, am glad to see you.'

He extended his hand, but Heriot bowed with much formal complaisance, instead of accepting the courtesy, which in those times, when the distinction of ranks was much guarded by etiquette and ceremony, was considered as a distinguished favour.

'You are displeased with me, Master Heriot,' said Lord Glenvarloch, reddening, for he was not deceived by the worthy citizen's affectation of extreme reverence and respect.

'By no means, my lord,' replied Heriot; 'but I have been in France, and have thought it as well to import, along with other more substantial articles, a small sample of that good-breeding which the French are so renowned for.'

'It is not kind of you,' said Nigel, 'to bestow the first use of it on an old and obliged friend.'

Heriot only answered to this observation with a short, dry cough, and then proceeded.

'Hem! hem! — I say, ahem! My lord, as my French politeness may not carry me far, I would willingly know whether I am to speak as a friend, since your lordship is pleased to term me such; or whether I am, as befits my condition, to confine myself to the needful business which must be treated of between us.'

'Speak as a friend by all means, Master Heriot,' said Nigel; 'I perceive you have adopted some of the numerous prejudices against me, if not all of them. Speak out, and frankly — what I cannot deny I will at least confess.'

'And I trust, my lord, redress,' said Heriot.

'So far as is in my power, certainly,' answered Nigel.

'Ah! my lord,' continued Heriot, 'that is a melancholy though a necessary restriction; for how lightly may any one do an hundred times more than the degree of evil which it may be within his power to repair to the sufferers and to society! But we are not alone here,' he said, stopping, and darting his shrewd eye towards the muffled figure of the disguised maiden, whose utmost efforts had not enabled her so to adjust her position as altogether to escape observation.

More anxious to prevent her being discovered than to keep his own affairs private, Nigel hastily answered — ''T is a page of mine; you may speak freely before him. He is of France, and knows no English.'

'I am then to speak freely,' said Heriot, after a second glance at the chair, 'perhaps my words may be more free than welcome.'

'Go on, sir,' said Nigel; 'I have told you I can bear reproof.'

In one word, then, my lord, why do I find you in this place, and whelmed with charges which must blacken a name rendered famous by ages of virtue?'

'Simply, then, you find me here,' said Nigel, 'because, to begin from my original error, I would be wiser than my father.'

'It was a difficult task, my lord,' replied Heriot: 'your father was voiced generally as the wisest and one of the bravest men of Scotland.'

'He commanded me,' continued Nigel, 'to avoid all gambling; and I took upon me to modify this injunction into regulating my play according to my skill, means, and the course of my luck.'

'Ay, self-opinion, acting on a desire of acquisition, my lord; you hoped to touch pitch and not to be defiled,' answered Heriot. 'Well, my lord, you need not say, for I have heard with much regret, how far this conduct diminished your reputation. Your next error I may without scruple remind you of. My lord — my lord, in whatever degree Lord Dalgarno may have failed towards you, the son of his father should have been sacred from your violence.'

'You speak in cold blood, Master Heriot, and I was smarting under a thousand wrongs inflicted on me under the mask of friendship.'

'That is, he gave your lordship bad advice, and you —' said Heriot.

'Was fool enough to follow his counsel,' answered Nigel. 'But we will pass this, Master Heriot, if you please. Old men and young men, men of the sword and men of peaceful occupation, always have thought, always will think, differently on such subjects.'

'I grant,' answered Heriot, 'the distinction between the old goldsmith and the young nobleman; still you should have had patience for Lord Huntinglen's sake, and prudence for your own. Supposing your quarrel just —'

'I pray you to pass on to some other charge,' said Lord Glenvarloch.

'I am not your accuser, my lord; but I trust in Heaven that your own heart has already accused you bitterly on the inhospitable wrong which your late landlord has sustained at your hand.'

'Had I been guilty of what you allude to,' said Lord Glenvarloch — 'had a moment of temptation hurried me away, I had long ere now most bitterly repented it. But, whoever may have wronged the unhappy woman, it was not I. I never heard of her folly until within this hour.'

'Come, my lord,' said Heriot, with some severity, 'this sounds too much like affectation. I know there is among our modern youth a new creed respecting adultery as well as homicide. I would rather hear you speak of a revision of the Decalogue, with mitigated penalties in favour of the privileged orders — I would rather hear you do this, than deny a fact in which you have been known to glory.'

'Glory! I never did, never would have taken honour to myself from such a cause,' said Lord Glenvarloch. 'I could not prevent other idle tongues and idle brains from making false inferences.'

'You would have known well enough how to stop their mouths, my lord,' replied Heriot, 'had they spoke of you what was unpleasing to your ears, and what the truth did not warrant. Come, my lord, remember your promise to confess; and, indeed, to confess is, in this case, in some slight sort to redress. I will grant you are young, the woman handsome, and, as I myself have observed, light-headed enough. Let me know where she is. Her foolish husband has still some compassion for her, will save her from infamy, perhaps, in time, receive her back; for we are a good-natured generation, we traders. Do not, my lord, emulate those who work mischief merely for the pleasure of doing so; it is the very devil's worst quality.'

'Your grave remonstrances will drive me mad,' said Nigel. 'There is a show of sense and reason in what you say; and yet it is positively insisting on my telling the retreat of a fugitive of whom I know nothing earthly.'

'It is well, my lord,' answered Heriot, coldly. 'You have a right, such as it is, to keep your own secrets; but, since my discourse on these points seems so totally unavailing, we had better proceed to business. Yet your father's image rises before me and seems to plead that I should go on.'

'Be it as you will, sir,' said Glenvarloch; 'he who doubts my word shall have no additional security for it.'

'Well, my lord, in the sanctuary at Whitefriars — a place of refuge so unsuitable to a young man of quality and character — I am told a murder was committed.'

'And you believe that I did the deed, I suppose?'

'God forbid, my lord!' said Heriot. 'The coroner's inquest hath set, and it appeared that your lordship, under your assumed name of Grahame, behaved with the utmost bravery.'

'No compliment, I pray you!' said Nigel. 'I am only too happy to find that I did not murder, or am not believed to have murdered, the old man.'

'True, my lord,' said Heriot; 'but even in this affair there lacks explanation. Your lordship embarked this morning in a wherry with a female, and, it is said, an immense sum of money, in specie and other valuables; but the woman has not since been heard of.'

'I parted with her at Paul's Wharf,' said Nigel, 'where she went ashore with her charge. I gave her a letter to that very man, John Christie.'

'Ay, that is the waterman's story; but John Christie denies that he remembers anything of the matter.'

'I am sorry to hear this,' said the young nobleman; 'I hope in Heaven she has not been trepanned for the treasure she had with her.'

'I hope not, my lord,' replied Heriot; 'but men's minds are much disturbed about it. Our national character suffers on all hands. Men remember the fatal case of Lord Sanquhar, hanged for the murder of a fencing-master; and exclaim, they will not have their wives whored and their property stolen by the nobility of Scotland.'

'And all this is laid to my door!' said Nigel; 'my exculpation is easy.'

'I trust so, my lord,' said Heriot; 'nay, in this particular, I do not doubt it. But why did you leave Whitefriars under such circumstances?'

'Master Reginald Lowestoffe sent a boat for me, with intimation to provide for my safety.'

'I am sorry to say,' replied Heriot, 'that he denies all knowledge of your lordship's motions, after having despatched a messenger to you with some baggage.'

'The watermen told me they were employed by him.'

'Watermen!' said Heriot. 'One of these proves to be an idle apprentice, an old acquaintance of mine, the other has escaped; but the fellow who is in custody persists in saying he was employed by your lordship, and you only.'

'He lies!' said Lord Glenvarloch, hastily. 'He told me Master Lowestoffe had sent him. I hope that kind-hearted gentleman is at liberty?'

'He is,' answered Heriot; 'and has escaped with a rebuke from the benchers, for interfering in such a matter as your lordship's. The court desire to keep well with the young Templars in these times of commotion, or he had not come off so well.'

'That is the only word of comfort I have heard from you,' replied Nigel. 'But this poor woman — she and her trunk were committed to the charge of two porters.'

'So said the pretended waterman; but none of the fellows who ply at the wharf will acknowledge the employment. I see the idea makes you uneasy, my lord; but every effort is made to discover the poor woman's place of retreat — if, indeed, she yet lives. And now, my lord, my errand is spoken, so far as it relates exclusively to your lordship; what remains is matter of business of a more formal kind.'

'Let us proceed to it without delay,' said Lord Glenvarloch. 'I would hear of the affairs of any one rather than of my own.'

'You cannot have forgotten, my lord,' said Heriot, 'the transaction which took place some weeks since at Lord Huntinglen's, by which a large sum of money was advanced for the redemption of your lordship's estate?'

'I remember it perfectly,' said Nigel; 'and your present austerity cannot make me forget your kindness on the occasion.'

Heriot bowed gravely, and went on—'That money was advanced under the expectation and hope that it might be replaced by the contents of a grant to your lordship, under the royal sign-manual, in payment of certain monies due by the crown to your father. I trust your lordship understood the transaction at the time; I trust you now understand my resumption of its import, and hold it to be correct?'

'Undeniably correct,' answered Lord Glenvarloch. 'If the sums contained in the warrant cannot be recovered, my lands become the property of those who paid off the original holders of the mortgage, and now stand in their right.'

'Even so, my lord,' said Heriot. 'And your lordship's unhappy circumstances having, it would seem, alarmed these creditors, they are now, I am sorry to say, pressing for one or other of these alternatives—possession of the land or payment of their debt.'

'They have a right to one or other,' answered Lord Glenvarloch; 'and as I cannot do the last in my present condition, I suppose they must enter on possession.'

'Stay, my lord,' replied Heriot; 'if you have ceased to call me a friend to your person, at least you shall see I am willing to be such to your father's house, were it but for the sake of your father's memory. If you will trust me with the warrant under the sign-manual, I believe circumstances do now so stand at court that I may be able to recover the money for you.'

'I would do so gladly,' said Lord Glenvarloch, 'but the casket which contains it is not in my possession. It was seized when I was arrested at Greenwich.'

'It will be no longer withheld from you,' said Heriot; 'for, I understand, my master's natural good sense, and some information which he has procured, I know not how, has induced him to contradict the whole charge of the attempt on his person. It is entirely hushed up; and you will only be proceeded against for your violence on Lord Dalgarno, committed within the verge of the palace, and that you will find heavy enough to answer.'

'I will not shrink under the weight,' said Lord Glenvarloch. 'But that is not the present point. If I had that casket—'

'Your baggage stood in the little ante-room, as I passed,' said the citizen; 'the casket caught my eye. I think you had it of me. It was my old friend Sir Faithful Frugal's. Ay, he too had a son—'

Here he stopped short.

'A son who, like Lord Glenvarloch's, did no credit to his father. Was it not so you would have ended the sentence, Master Heriot?' asked the young nobleman.

'My lord, it was a word spoken rashly,' answered Heriot. 'God may mend all in His own good time. This, however, I will say, that I have sometimes envied my friends their fair and flourishing families; and yet have I seen such changes when death has removed the head, so many rich men's sons penniless, the heirs of so many knights and nobles acreless, that I think mine own estate and memory, as I shall order it, has a fair chance of outliving those of greater men, though God has given me no heir of my name. But this is from the purpose. Ho! warder, bring in Lord Glenvarloch's baggage.'

The officer obeyed. 'Seals had been placed upon the trunk and casket, but were now removed,' the warder said, 'in consequence of the subsequent orders from court, and the whole was placed at the prisoner's free disposal.'

Desirous to bring this painful visit to a conclusion, Lord Glenvarloch opened the casket, and looked through the papers which it contained, first hastily, and then more slowly and accurately; but it was all in vain. The sovereign's signed warrant had disappeared.

'I thought and expected nothing better,' said George Heriot, bitterly. 'The beginning of evil is the letting out of water. Here is a fair heritage lost, I dare say, on a foul cast at dice or a conjuring-trick at cards! My lord, your surprise is well played. I give you full joy of your accomplishments. I have seen many as young brawlers and spendthrifts, but never so young and accomplished a dissembler. Nay, man, never bend your angry brows on me. I speak in bitterness of heart, from what I remember of your worthy father; and if his son hears of his degeneracy from no one else, he shall hear it from the old goldsmith.'

This new suspicion drove Nigel to the very extremity of his patience; yet the motives and zeal of the good old man, as well as the circumstances of suspicion which created his displeasure, were so excellent an excuse for it, that they formed an absolute curb on the resentment of Lord Glenvarloch, and constrained him, after two or three hasty exclamations, to observe a proud and sullen silence. At length, Master Heriot resumed his lecture.

'Hark you, my lord,' he said, 'it is scarce possible that this most important paper can be absolutely assigned away. Let me know in what obscure corner, and for what petty sum, it lies pledged; something may yet be done.'

'Your efforts in my favour are the more generous,' said Lord Glenvarloch, 'as you offer them to one whom you believe you have cause to think hardly of; but they are altogether unavailing. Fortune has taken the field against me at every point. Even let her win the battle.'

'Zouns!' exclaimed Heriot, impatiently, 'you would make a saint swear! Why, I tell you, if this paper, the loss of which seems to sit so light on you, be not found, farewell to the fair lordship of Glenvarloch — firth and forest, lea and furrow, lake and stream — all that has been in the house of Olifaunt since the days of William the Lion!'

'Farewell to them, then,' said Nigel, 'and that moan is soon made.'

''Sdeath! my lord, you will make more moan for it ere you die,' said Heriot, in the same tone of angry impatience.

'Not I, my old friend,' said Nigel. 'If I mourn, Master Heriot, it will be for having lost the good opinion of a worthy man, and lost it, as I must say, most undeservedly.'

'Ay — ay, young man,' said Heriot, shaking his head, 'make me believe that if you can. To sum the matter up,' he said, rising from his seat and walking towards that occupied by the disguised female, 'for our matters are now drawn into small compass, you shall as soon make me believe that this masquerading mummer, on whom I now lay the hand of paternal authority, is a French page, who understands no English.'

So saying, he took hold of the supposed page's cloak, and, not without some gentle degree of violence, led into the middle of the apartment the disguised fair one, who in vain attempted to cover her face, first with her mantle and afterwards with her hands; both which impediments Master Heriot removed, something unceremoniously, and gave to view the detected daughter of the old chronologist, his own fair god-daughter, Margaret Ramsay.

'Here is goodly gear!' he said; and, as he spoke, he could not prevent himself from giving her a slight shake, for we have elsewhere noticed that he was a severe disciplinarian. 'How comes it, minion, that I find you in so shameless a dress and so unworthy a situation? Nay, your modesty is now mistimed, it should have come sooner. Speak, or I will —'

'Master Heriot,' said Lord Glenvarloch, 'whatever right you may have over this maiden elsewhere, while in my apartment she is under my protection.'

'Your protection, my lord! a proper protector! And how long, mistress, have you been under my lord's protection? Speak out, forsooth!'

'For the matter of two hours, godfather,' answered the maiden, with a countenance bent to the ground and covered with blushes, 'but it was against my will.'

'Two hours!' repeated Heriot, 'space enough for mischief. My lord, this is, I suppose, another victim offered to your character of gallantry — another adventure to be boasted of at Beaujeu's ordinary? Methinks the roof under which you first met this silly maiden should have secured *her*, at least, from such a fate.'

'On my honour, Master Heriot,' said Lord Glenvarloch, 'you remind me now, for the first time, that I saw this young lady in your family. Her features are not easily forgotten, and yet I was trying in vain to recollect where I had last looked on them. For your suspicions, they are as false as they are injurious both to her and me. I had but discovered her disguise as you entered. I am satisfied, from her whole behaviour, that her presence here in this dress was involuntary; and God forbid that I had been capable of taking advantage of it to her prejudice.'

'It is well mouthed, my lord,' said Heriot; 'but a cunning clerk can read the Apocrypha as loud as the Scripture. Frankly, my lord, you are come to that pass where your words will not be received without a warrant.'

'I should not speak, perhaps,' said Margaret, the natural vivacity of whose temper could never be long suppressed by any situation, however disadvantageous, 'but I cannot be silent. Godfather, you do me wrong, and no less wrong to this young nobleman. You say his words want a warrant. I know where to find a warrant for some of them, and the rest I deeply and devoutly believe without one.'

'And I thank you, maiden,' replied Nigel, 'for the good opinion you have expressed. I am at that point, it seems, though how I have been driven to it I know not, where every fair construction of my actions and motives is refused me. I am the more obliged to her who grants me that right which the world denies me. For you, lady, were I at liberty, I have a sword and arm should know how to guard your reputation.'

'Upon my word, a perfect Amadis and Oriana!' said George Heriot. 'I should soon get my throat cut betwixt the knight and the princess, I suppose, but that the beef-eaters are happily within halloo. Come — come, lady light o' love, if you mean to make your way with me, it must be by plain facts, not by speeches from romaunts and play-books. How, in Heaven's name, came you here?'

'Sir,' answered Margaret, 'since I must speak, I went to Greenwich this morning with Monna Paula, to present a petition to the King on the part of the Lady Hermione.'

'Mercy-a-gad!' exclaimed Heriot, 'is she in the dance, too? Could she not have waited my return to stir in her affairs? But I suppose the intelligence I sent her had rendered her restless. Ah! woman — woman! he that goes partner with you had need of a double share of patience, for you will bring none into the common stock. Well, but what on earth had this embassy of Monna Paula's to do with your absurd disguise? Speak out.'

'Monna Paula was frightened,' answered Margaret, 'and did not know how to set about the errand, for you know she scarce ever goes out of doors — and so — and so — I agreed to go with her to give her courage; and, for the dress, I am sure you remember I wore it at a Christmas mumming, and you thought it not unbeseeming.'

'Yes, for a Christmas parlour,' said Heriot, 'but not to go a-masking through the country in. I do remember it, minion, and I knew it even now; that and your little shoe there, linked with a hint I had in the morning from a friend, or one who called himself such, led to your detection.'

Here Lord Glenvarloch could not help giving a glance at the pretty foot which even the staid citizen thought worth recollection; it was but a glance, for he saw how much the least degree of observation added to Margaret's distress and confusion.

'And tell me, maiden,' continued Master Heriot, for what we have observed was bye-play, 'did the Lady Hermione know of this fair work?'

'I dared not have told her for the world,' said Margaret; 'she thought one of our apprentices went with Monna Paula.'

It may be here noticed, that the words 'our apprentices' seemed to have in them something of a charm to break the fascination with which Lord Glenvarloch had hitherto listened to the broken yet interesting details of Margaret's history.

'And wherefore went he not? He had been a fitter companion for Monna Paula than you, I wot,' said the citizen.

'He was otherwise employed,' said Margaret, in a voice scarce audible.

Master George darted a hasty glance at Nigel, and when he saw his features betoken no consciousness, he muttered to himself — 'It must be better than I feared. And so this cursed Spaniard, with her head full, as they all have, of disguises, trap-doors, rope-ladders, and masks, was jade and fool enough to take you with her on this wild-goose errand? And how sped you, I pray?'

'Just as we reached the gate of the Park,' replied Margaret, 'the cry of "Treason" was raised. I know not what became of Monna, but I ran till I fell into the arms of a very decent serving-man, called Linklater; and I was fain to tell him I was your god-daughter, and so he kept the rest of them from me, and got me to speech of his Majesty, as I entreated him to do.'

'It is the only sign you showed in the whole matter that common sense had not utterly deserted your little skull,' said Heriot.

'His Majesty,' continued the damsel, 'was so gracious as to receive me alone, though the courtiers cried out against the danger to his person, and would have searched me for arms, God help me! but the King forbade it. I fancy he had a hint from Linklater how the truth stood with me.'

'Well, maiden, I ask not what passed,' said Heriot; 'it becomes not me to pry into my master's secrets. Had you been closeted with his grandfather, the Red Tod of St. Andrews, as Davie Lindsay used to call him, by my faith, I should have had my own thoughts of the matter; but our master, God bless him, is douce and temperate, and Solomon in everything save in the chapter of wives and concubines.'

'I know not what you mean, sir,' answered Margaret. 'His Majesty was most kind and compassionate, but said I must be sent hither, and that the lieutenant's lady, the Lady Mansel, would have a charge of me, and see that I sustained no wrong; and the King promised to send me in a tilted barge, and under conduct of a person well known to you; and thus I come to be in the Tower.'

'But how or why in this apartment, nymph?' said George Heriot. 'Expound that to me, for I think the riddle needs reading.'

'I cannot explain it, sir, further than that the Lady Mansel sent me here, in spite of my earnest prayers, tears, and entreaties. I was not afraid of anything, for I knew I should be protected. But I could have died then — could die now — for very shame and confusion!'

'Well — well, if your tears are genuine,' said Heriot, 'they may the sooner wash out the memory of your fault. Knows your father aught of this escape of yours?'

'I would not for the world he did,' replied she; 'he believes me with the Lady Hermione.'

'Ay, honest Davie can regulate his hologes better than his family. Come, damsel, now I will escort you back to the Lady Mansel, and pray her, of her kindness, that, when she is again trusted with a goose, she will not give it to the fox to keep. The warders will let us pass to my lady's lodgings, I trust.'

'Stay but one moment,' said Lord Glenvarloch. 'Whatever hard opinion you may have formed of me, I forgive you, for time will show that you do me wrong; and you yourself, I think, will be the first to regret the injustice you have done me. But involve not in your suspicions this young person, for whose purity of thought angels themselves should be vouchers. I have marked every look, every gesture; and whilst I can draw breath, I shall ever think of her with —'

'Think not at all of her, my lord,' answered George Heriot, interrupting him; 'it is, I have a notion, the best favour you can do her; or think of her as the daughter of Davie Ramsay, the clock-maker, no proper subject for fine speeches, romantic adventures, or high-flown Arcadian compliments. I give you god-den, my lord. I think not altogether so harshly as my speech may have spoken. If I can help — that is, if I saw my way clearly through this labyrinth — but it avails not talking now.

I give your lordship god-den. Here, warder! Permit us to pass to the Lady Mansel's apartment.'

The warder said he must have orders from the lieutenant; and as he retired to procure them, the parties remained standing near each other, but without speaking, and scarce looking at each other save by stealth — a situation which, in two of the party at least, was sufficiently embarrassing. The difference of rank, though in that age a consideration so serious, could not prevent Lord Glenvarloch from seeing that Margaret Ramsay was one of the prettiest young women he had ever beheld; from suspecting, he could scarce tell why, that he himself was not indifferent to her; from feeling assured that he had been the cause of much of her present distress — admiration, self-love, and generosity, acting in favour of the same object; and when the yeoman returned with permission to his guests to withdraw, Nigel's obeisance to the beautiful daughter of the mechanic was marked with an expression which called up in her cheeks as much colour as any incident of the eventful day had hitherto excited. She returned the courtesy timidly and irresolutely, clung to her godfather's arm, and left the apartment, which, dark as it was, had never yet appeared so obscure to Nigel as when the door closed behind her.

CHAPTER XXX

> **Yet though thou shouldst be dragg'd in scorn**
> **To yonder ignominious tree,**
> **Thou shalt not want one faithful friend**
> **To share the cruel fates' decree.**
>
> ***Ballad of Jemmy Dawson.***

MASTER GEORGE HERIOT and his ward, as she might justly be termed, for his affection to Margaret imposed on him all the cares of a guardian, were ushered by the yeoman of the guard to the lodging of the lieutenant, where they found him seated with his lady. They were received by both with that decorous civility which Master Heriot's character and supposed influence demanded, even at the hand of a punctilious old soldier and courtier like Sir Edward Mansel. Lady Mansel received Margaret with like courtesy, and informed Master George that she was now only her guest, and no longer her prisoner.

'She is at liberty,' she said, 'to return to her friends under your charge; such is his Majesty's pleasure.'

'I am glad of it, madam,' answered Heriot, 'but only I could have wished her freedom had taken place before her foolish interview with that singular young man; and I marvel your ladyship permitted it.'

'My good Master Heriot,' said Sir Edward, 'we act according to the commands of one better and wiser than ourselves: our orders from his Majesty must be strictly and literally obeyed; and I need not say that the wisdom of his Majesty doth more than ensure —'

'I know his Majesty's wisdom well,' said Heriot; 'yet there is an old proverb about fire and flax — well, let it pass.'

'I see Sir Mungo Malagrowther stalking towards the door of the lodging,' said the Lady Mansel, 'with the gait of a lame crane; it is his second visit this morning.'

'He brought the warrant for discharging Lord Glenvarloch of the charge of treason,' said Sir Edward.

'And from him,' said Heriot, 'I heard much of what had befallen; for I came from France only late last evening, and somewhat unexpectedly.'

As they spoke, Sir Mungo entered the apartment, saluted the lieutenant of the Tower and his lady with ceremonious civility, honoured George Heriot with a patronising nod of acknowledgment, and accosted Margaret with — 'Hey! my young charge, you have not doffed your masculine attire yet?'

'She does not mean to lay it aside, Sir Mungo,' said Heriot, speaking loud, 'until she has had satisfaction from you for betraying her disguise to me, like a false knight; and in very deed, Sir Mungo, I think, when you told me she was rambling about in so strange a dress, you might have said also that she was under Lady Mansel's protection.'

'That was the King's secret, Master Heriot,' said Sir Mungo, throwing himself into a chair with an air of atrabilarious importance; the other was a well-meaning hint to yourself, as the girl's friend.'

'Yes,' replied Heriot, 'it was done like yourself: enough told to make me unhappy about her, not a word which could relieve my uneasiness.'

'Sir Mungo will not hear that remark,' said the lady;

'we must change the subject. Is there any news from court, Sir Mungo? you have been to Greenwich?'

'You might as well ask me, madam,' answered the knight, 'whether there is any news from hell.'

'How, Sir Mungo — how!' said Sir Edward; 'measure your words something better. You speak of the court of King James.'

'Sir Edward, if I spoke of the court of the twelve kaisers, I would say it is as confused for the present as the infernal regions. Courtiers of forty years' standing, and such I may write myself, are as far to seek in the matter as a minnow in the Maelstrom. Some folk say the King has frowned on the Prince, some that the Prince has looked grave on the Duke, some that Lord Glenvarloch will be hanged for high treason, and some that there is matter against Lord Dalgarno that may cost him as much as his head 's worth.'

'And what do you, that are a courtier of forty years' standing, think of it all?' said Sir Edward Mansel.

'Nay — nay, do not ask him, Sir Edward,' said the lady, with an expressive look to her husband.

'Sir Mungo is too witty,' added Master Heriot, 'to remember that he who says aught that may be repeated to his own prejudice does but load a piece for any of the company to shoot him dead with, at their pleasure and convenience.'

'What!' said the bold knight, 'you think I am afraid of the trepan? Why now, what if I should say that Dalgarno has more wit than honesty, the Duke more sail than ballast, the Prince more pride than prudence, and that the King —' The Lady Mansel held up her finger in a warning manner — 'that the King is my very good master, who has given me, for forty years and more, dog's wages, videlicet, bones and beating. Why now, all this is said, and Archie Armstrong [1] says worse than this of the best of them every day.'

'The more fool he,' said George Heriot; 'yet he is not so utterly wrong, for folly is his best wisdom. But do not you, Sir Mungo, set your wit against a fool's, though he be a court fool.'

'A fool, said you?' replied Sir Mungo, not having fully heard what Master Heriot said, or not choosing to have it thought so — 'I have been a fool indeed, to hang on at a close-fisted court here, when men of understanding and men of action have been making fortunes in every other place of Europe. But here a man comes indifferently off unless he gets a great key to turn (looking at Sir Edward), or can beat tattoo with a hammer on a pewter plate. Well, sirs, I must make as much haste back on mine errand, as if I were a fee'd messenger. Sir Edward and my lady, I leave my commendations with you; and my good-will with you, Master Heriot; and for this breaker of bounds, if you will act by my counsel, some maceration by fasting, and a gentle use of the rod, is the best cure for her giddy fits.'

'If you propose for Greenwich, Sir Mungo,' said the lieutenant, 'I can spare you the labour: the King comes immediately to Whitehall.'

'And that must be the reason the council are summoned to meet in such hurry,' said Sir Mungo. 'Well, I will, with your permission, go to the poor lad Glenvarloch, and bestow some comfort on him.'

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[1] The celebrated court jester.

The lieutenant seemed to look up and pause for a moment as if in doubt.

'The lad will want a pleasant companion, who can tell him the nature of the punishment which he is to suffer, and other matters of concernment. I will not leave him until I show him how absolutely he hath himself ruined from feather to spur, how deplorable is his present state, and how small his chance of mending it.'

'Well, Sir Mungo,' replied the lieutenant, 'if you really think all this likely to be very consolatory to the party concerned, I will send a warder to conduct you.'

'And I,' said George Heriot, 'will humbly pray of Lady Mansel that she will lend some of her handmaiden's apparel to this giddy-brained girl; for I shall forfeit my reputation if I walk up Tower Hill with her in that mad guise— and yet the silly lassie looks not so ill in it neither.'

'I will send my coach with you instantly,' said the obliging lady.

'Faith, madam, and if you will honour us by such courtesy, I will gladly accept it at your hands,' said the citizen, 'for business presses hard on me, and the forenoon is already lost, to little purpose.'

The coach, being ordered accordingly, transported the worthy citizen and his charge to his mansion in Lombard Street. There he found his presence was anxiously expected by the Lady Hermione, who had just received an order to be in readiness to attend upon the royal privy council in the course of an hour; and upon whom, in her inexperience of business, and long retirement from society and the world, the intimation had made as deep an impression as if it had not been the necessary consequence of the petition which she had presented to the King by Monna Paula. George Heriot gently blamed her for taking any steps in an affair so important until his return from France, especially as he had requested her to remain quiet, in a letter which accompanied the evidence he had transmitted to her from Paris. She could only plead in answer the influence which her immediately stirring in the matter was likely to have on the affair of her kinsman Lord Glenvarloch, for she was ashamed to acknowledge how much she had been gained on by the eager importunity of her youthful companion. The motive of Margaret's eagerness was, of course, the safety of Nigel; but we must leave it to time to show in what particulars that came to be connected with the petition of the Lady Hermione. Meanwhile, we return to the visit with which Sir Mungo Malagrowther favoured the afflicted young nobleman in his place of captivity.

The knight, after the usual salutations, and having prefaced his discourse with a great deal of professed regret for Nigel's situation, sat down beside him, and, composing his grotesque features into the most lugubrious despondence, began his raven-song as follows:—

'I bless God, my lord, that I was the person who had the pleasure to bring his Majesty's mild message to the lieutenant, discharging the higher prosecution against ye, for anything meditated against his Majesty's sacred person; for, admit you be prosecuted on the lesser offence, or breach of privilege of the palace and its precincts, *usque ad mutilationem* — even to dismemberation — as it is most likely you will, yet the loss of a member is nothing to being hanged and drawn quick, after the fashion of a traitor.'

Lombard Street

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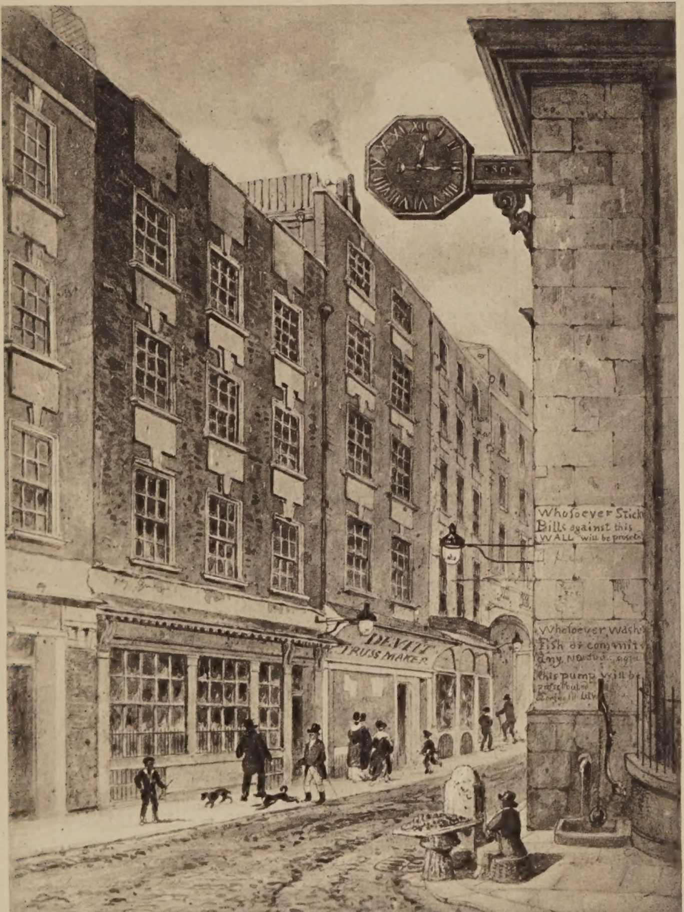
DEVITT
TRUSS MAKER
Whosoever Sticks
Bills against this
WALL will be prosecuted
Whosoever washes
Fish or commits
any nuisance against
this pump will be
prosecuted

'I should feel the shame of having deserved such a punishment,' answered Nigel, 'more than the pain of undergoing it.'

'Doubtless, my lord, the having, as you say, deserved it must be an excruciation to your own mind,' replied his tormentor — 'a kind of mental and metaphysical hanging, drawing, and quartering, which may be in some measure equipollent with the external application of hemp, iron, fire, and the like, to the outer man.'

'I say, Sir Mungo,' repeated Nigel, 'and beg you to understand my words, that I am unconscious of any error, save that of having arms on my person when I chanced to approach that of my sovereign.'

'Ye are right, my lord, to acknowledge nothing,' said Sir Mungo. 'We have an old proverb, Confess, and — so forth. And indeed, as to the weapons, his Majesty has a special ill-will at all arms whatsoever, and more especially pistols; but, as I said, there is an end of that matter.[1] I wish you as well through the next, which is altogether unlikely.'

'Surely, Sir Mungo,' answered Nigel, 'you yourself might say something in my favour concerning the affair in the Park. None knows better than you that I was at that moment urged by wrongs of the most heinous nature, offered to me by Lord Dalgarno, many of which were reported to me by yourself, much to the inflammation of my passion.'

'Alack-a-day! — alack-a-day!' replied Sir Mungo, 'I remember but too well how much your choler was inflamed, in spite of the various remonstrances which I made to you respecting the sacred nature of the place.

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[1] See Note 10.

Alas! — alas! you cannot say you leaped into the mire for want of warning.'

'I see, Sir Mungo, you are determined to remember nothing which can do me service,' said Nigel.

'Blythely would I do ye service,' said the knight; 'and the best whilk I can think of is, to tell you the process of the punishment to the whilk you will be indubitably subjected, I having had the good fortune to behold it performed in the Queen's time, on a chield that had written a pasquinado. I was then in my Lord Gray's train, who lay leaguer here, and, being always covetous of pleasing and profitable sights, I could not dispense with being present on the occasion.'

'I should be surprised indeed,' said Lord Glenvarloch, 'if you had so far put restraint upon your benevolence as to stay away from such an exhibition.'

'Hey! was your lordship praying me to be present at your own execution?' answered the knight. 'Troth, my lord, it will be a painful sight to a friend, but I will rather punish myself than baulk you. It is a pretty pageant, in the main — a very pretty pageant. The fallow came on with such a bold face, it was a pleasure to look on him. He was dressed all in white, to signify harmlessness and innocence. The thing was done on a scaffold at Westminster; most likely yours will be at Charing. There were the sheriff's and the marshal's men, and what not; the executioner, with his cleaver and mallet, and his man, with a pan of hot charcoal, and the irons for cautery. He was a dexterous fallow that Derrick. This man Gregory is not fit to jipper a joint with him; it might be worth your lordship's while to have the loon sent to a barber-surgeon's, to learn some needful scantling of anatomy; it may be for the benefit of yourself and other unhappy sufferers, and also a kindness to Gregory.'

'I will not take the trouble,' said Nigel. 'If the laws will demand my hand, the executioner may get it off as he best can. If the King leaves it where it is, it may chance to do him better service.'

'Vera noble — vera grand, indeed, my lord,' said Sir Mungo; 'it is pleasant to see a brave man suffer. This fallow whom I spoke of — this Tubbs, or Stubbs, or whatever the plebeian was called — came forward as bold as an emperor, and said to the people, "Good friends, I come to leave here the hand of a true Englishman," and clapped it on the dressing-block with as much ease as if he had laid it on his sweetheart's shoulder; whereupon Derrick, the hangman, adjusting, d' ye mind me, the edge of his cleaver on the very joint, hit it with the mallet with such force that the hand flew off as far from the owner as a gauntlet which the challenger casts down in the tilt-yard. Well, sir, Stubbs, or Tubbs, lost no whit of countenance, until the fallow clapped the hissing-hot iron on his raw stump. My lord, it fizzed like a rasher of bacon, and the fallow set up an elritch screech, which made some think his courage was abated; but not a whit, for he plucked off his hat with his left hand, and waved it, crying, "God save the Queen, and confound all evil counsellors!" The people gave him three cheers, which he deserved for his stout heart; and, truly, I hope to see your lordship suffer with the same magnanimity.' [1]

'I thank you, Sir Mungo,' said Nigel, who had not been able to forbear some natural feelings of an unpleasant nature during this lively detail; 'I have no doubt the exhibition will be a very engaging one to you and the other spectators, whatever it may prove to the party principally concerned.'

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[1] See Note 11.

'Vera engaging,' answered Sir Mungo, 'vera interesting — vera interesting indeed, though not altogether so much so as an execution for high treason. I saw Digby, the Winters, Fawkes, and the rest of the Gunpowder gang, suffer for that treason, whilk was a vera grand spectacle, as well in regard to their sufferings as to their constancy in enduring.'

'I am the more obliged to your goodness, Sir Mungo,' replied Nigel, 'that has induced you, although you have lost the sight, to congratulate me on my escape from the hazard of making the same edifying appearance.'

'As you say, my lord,' answered Sir Mungo, 'the loss is chiefly in appearance. Nature has been very bountiful to us, and has given duplicates of some organs, that we may endure the loss of one of them, should some such circumstance chance in our pilgrimage. See my poor dexter, abridged to one thumb, one finger, and a stump — by the blow of my adversary's weapon, however, and not by any carnificial knife. Weel, sir, this poor maimed hand doth me, in some sort, as much service as ever; and, admit yours to be taken off by the wrist, you have still your left hand for your service, and are better off than the little Dutch dwarf here about town, who threads a needle, limns, writes, and tosses a pike merely by means of his feet, without ever a hand to help him.'

'Well, Sir Mungo,' said Lord Glenvarloch, 'this is all no doubt very consolatory; but I hope the King will spare my hand to fight for him in battle, where, notwithstanding all your kind encouragement, I could spend my blood much more cheerfully than on a scaffold.'

'It is even a sad truth,' replied Sir Mungo, 'that your lordship was but too like to have died on a scaffold — not a soul to speak for you but that deluded lassie, Maggie Ramsay.'

'Whom mean you?' said Nigel, with more interest than he had hitherto shown in the knight's communications.

'Nay, who should I mean but that travestied lassie whom we dined with when we honoured Heriot, the goldsmith? Ye ken best how you have made interest with her, but I saw her on her knees to the King for you. She was committed to my charge, to bring her up hither in honour and safety. Had I had my own will, I would have had her to Bridewell, to flog the wild blood out of her — a cutty-quean, to think of wearing the breeches, and not so much as married yet!'

'Hark ye, Sir Mungo Malagrowther,' answered Nigel, 'I would have you talk of that young person with fitting respect.'

'With all the respect that befits your lordship's paramour and Davie Ramsay's daughter I shall certainly speak of her, my lord,' said Sir Mungo, assuming a dry tone of irony.

Nigel was greatly disposed to have made a serious quarrel of it, but with Sir Mungo such an affair would have been ridiculous; he smothered his resentment, therefore, and conjured him to tell what he had heard and seen respecting this young person.

'Simply, that I was in the ante-room when she had audience, and heard the King say, to my great perplexity, "*Pulchra sane puella*"; and Maxwell, who hath but indifferent Latin ears, thought that his Majesty called on him by his own name of Sawney, and thrust into the presence, and there I saw our sovereign James, with his own hand, raising up the lassie, who, as I said heretofore, was travestied in man's attire. I should have had my own thoughts of it, but our gracious master is auld, and was nae great gilravager amang the queans even in his youth; and he was comforting her in his own way, and saying, "Ye needna greet about it, my bonny woman, Glenvarlochides shall have fair play; and, indeed, when the hurry was off our spirits, we could not believe that he had any design on our person. And touching his other offences, we will look wisely and closely into the matter." So I got charge to take the young fence-louper to the Tower here, and deliver her to the charge of Lady Mansel; and his Majesty charged me to say not a word to her about your offences. "For," said he, "the poor thing is breaking her heart for him."'

'And on this you charitably have founded the opinion to the prejudice of this young lady which you have now thought proper to express?' said Lord Glenvarloch.

'In honest truth, my lord,' replied Sir Mungo, 'what opinion would you have me form of a wench who gets into male habiliments, and goes on her knees to the King for a wild young nobleman? I wot not what the fashionable word may be, for the phrase changes, though the custom abides. But truly I must needs think this young leddy — if you call Watchie Ramsay's daughter a young leddy — demeans herself more like a leddy of pleasure than a leddy of honour.'

'You do her egregious wrong, Sir Mungo,' said Nigel; 'or rather you have been misled by appearances.'

'So will all the world be misled, my lord,' replied the satirist, 'unless you were doing that to disabuse them which your father's son will hardly judge it fit to do.'

'And what may that be, I pray you?'

'E'en marry the lass — make her Leddy Glenvarloch. Ay — ay, ye may start, but it 's the course you are driving on. Rather marry than do worse, if the worst be not done already.'

'Sir Mungo,' said Nigel, 'I pray you to forbear this subject, and rather return to that of the mutilation, upon which it pleased you to enlarge a short while since.'

'I have not time at present,' said Sir Mungo, hearing the clock strike four; 'but so soon as you shall have received sentence, my lord, you may rely on my giving you the fullest detail of the whole solemnity; and I give you my word, as a knight and gentleman, that I will myself attend you on the scaffold, whoever may cast sour looks on me for doing so. I bear a heart to stand by a friend in the worst of times.'

So saying, he wished Lord Glenvarloch farewell, who felt as heartily rejoiced at his departure, though it may be a bold word, as any person who had ever undergone his society.

But, when left to his own reflections, Nigel could not help feeling solitude nearly as irksome as the company of Sir Mungo Malagrowther. The total wreck of his fortune, which seemed now to be rendered unavoidable by the loss of the royal warrant, that had afforded him the means of redeeming his paternal estate, was an unexpected and additional blow. When he had seen the warrant he could not precisely remember; but was inclined to think it was in the casket when he took out money to pay the miser for his lodgings at Whitefriars. Since then, the casket had been almost constantly under his own eye, except during the short time he was separated from his baggage by the arrest in Greenwich Park. It might, indeed, have been taken out at that time, for he had no reason to think either his person or his property was in the hands of those who wished him well; but, on the other hand, the locks of the strong-box had sustained no violence that he could observe, and, being of a particular and complicated construction, he thought they could scarce be opened without an instrument made on purpose, adapted to their peculiarities, and for this there had been no time. But, speculate as he would on the matter, it was clear that this important document was gone, and probable that it had passed into no friendly hands. 'Let it be so,' said Nigel to himself; 'I am scarcely worse off respecting my prospects of fortune than when I first reached this accursed city. But to be hampered with cruel accusations and stained with foul suspicions; to be the object of pity of the most degrading kind to yonder honest citizen, and of the malignity of that envious and atrabilarious courtier, who can endure the good fortune and good qualities of another no more than the mole can brook sunshine — this is indeed a deplorable reflection; and the consequences must stick to my future life, and impede whatever my head, or my hand, if it is left me, might be able to execute in my favour.'

The feeling that he is the object of general dislike and dereliction seems to be one of the most unendurably painful to which a human being can be subjected. The most atrocious criminals, whose nerves have not shrunk from perpetrating the most horrid cruelty, endure more from the consciousness that no man will sympathise with their sufferings than from apprehension of the personal agony of their impending punishment; and are known often to attempt to palliate their enormities, and sometimes altogether to deny what is established by the clearest proof, rather than to leave life under the general ban of humanity. It was no wonder that Nigel, labouring under the sense of general, though unjust, suspicion, should, while pondering on so painful a theme, recollect that one at least had not only believed him innocent, but hazarded herself, with all her feeble power, to interpose in his behalf.

'Poor girl!' he repeated—'poor, rash, but generous maiden! your fate is that of her in Scottish story, who thrust her arm into the staple of the door, to oppose it as a bar against the assassins who threatened the murder of her sovereign. The deed of devotion was useless, save to give an immortal name to her by whom it was done, and whose blood flows, it is said, in the veins of my house.'

I cannot explain to the reader whether the recollection of this historical deed of devotion, and the lively effect which the comparison, a little overstrained perhaps, was likely to produce in favour of Margaret Ramsay, was not qualified by the concomitant ideas of ancestry and ancient descent with which that recollection was mingled. But the contending feelings suggested a new train of ideas. 'Ancestry,' he thought, 'and ancient descent, what are they to me? My patrimony alienated — my title become a reproach— for what can be so absurd as titled beggary? — my character subjected to suspicion — I will not remain in this country; and should I, at leaving it, procure the society of one so lovely, so brave, and so faithful, who should say that I derogated from the rank which I am virtually renouncing?'

There was something romantic and pleasing, as he pursued this picture of an attached and faithful pair, becoming all the world to each other, and stemming the tide of fate arm in arm; and to be linked thus with a creature so beautiful, and who had taken such devoted and disinterested concern in his fortunes, formed itself into such a vision as romantic youth loves best to dwell upon.

Suddenly his dream was painfully dispelled by the recollection that its very basis rested upon the most selfish ingratitude on his own part. Lord of his castle and his towers, his forests and fields, his fair patrimony and noble name, his mind would have rejected, as a sort of impossibility, the idea of elevating to his rank the daughter of a mechanic; but, when degraded from his nobility and plunged into poverty and difficulties, he was ashamed to feel himself not unwilling that this poor girl, in the blindness of her affection, should abandon all the better prospects of her own settled condition to embrace the precarious and doubtful course which he himself was condemned to. The generosity of Nigel's mind recoiled from the selfishness of the plan of happiness which he projected; and he made a strong effort to expel from his thoughts for the rest of the evening this fascinating female, or, at least, not to permit them to dwell upon the perilous circumstance that she was at present the only creature living who seemed to consider him as an object of kindness.

He could not, however, succeed in banishing her from his slumbers, when, after having spent a weary day, he betook himself to a perturbed couch. The form of Margaret mingled with the wild mass of dreams which his late adventures had suggested; and even when, copying the lively narrative of Sir Mungo, fancy presented to him the blood bubbling and hissing on the heated iron, Margaret stood behind him like a spirit of light, to breathe healing on the wound. At length nature was exhausted by these fantastic creations, and Nigel slept, and slept soundly, until awakened in the morning by the sound of a well-known voice, which had often broken his slumbers about the same hour.

CHAPTER XXXI

Marry, come up, sir, with your gentle blood!
Here 's a red stream beneath this coarse blue doublet
That warms the heart as kindly as if drawn
From the far source of old Assyrian kings,
Who first made mankind subject to their sway.

Old Play.

The sounds to which we alluded in our last were no other than the grumbling tones of Richie Moniplies's voice.

This worthy, like some other persons who rank high in their own opinion, was very apt, when he could have no other auditor, to hold conversation with one who was sure to be a willing listener — I mean with himself. He was now brushing and arranging Lord Glenvarloch's clothes, with as much composure and quiet assiduity as if he had never been out of his service, and grumbling betwixt whiles to the following purpose — 'Humph — ay, time cloak and jerkin were through my hands; I question if horse-hair has been passed over them since they and I last parted. The embroidery finely frayed too; and the gold buttons of the cloak — by my conscience, and as I am an honest man, there is a round dozen of them gane! This comes of Alsatian frolics — God keep us with His grace, and not give us over to our own devices! I see no sword, but that will be in respect of present circumstances.'

Nigel for some time could not help believing that he was still in a dream, so improbable did it seem that his domestic, whom he supposed to be in Scotland, should have found him out, and obtained access to him, in his present circumstances. Looking through the curtains, however, he became well assured of the fact, when he beheld the stiff and bony length of Richie, with a visage charged with nearly double its ordinary degree of importance, employed sedulously in brushing his master's cloak, and refreshing himself with whistling or humming, from interval to interval, some snatch of an old melancholy Scottish ballad-tune. Although sufficiently convinced of the identity of the party, Lord Glenvarloch could not help expressing his surprise in the superfluous question — 'In the name of Heaven, Richie, is this you?'

'And wha else suld it be, my lord?' answered Richie. 'I dreamna that your lordship's levee in this place is like to be attended by ony that are not bounden thereto by duty.'

'I am rather surprised,' answered Nigel, 'that it should be attended by any one at all — especially by you, Richie; for you know that we parted, and I thought you had reached Scotland long since.'

'I crave your lordship's pardon, but we have not parted yet, nor are soon likely so to do; for there gang twa folk's votes to the unmaking of a bargain, as to the making of ane. Though it was your lordship's pleasure so to conduct yourself that we were like to have parted, yet it was not, on reflection, my will to be gone. To be plain, if your lordship does not ken when you have a good servant, I ken when I have a kind master; and to say truth, you will be easier served now than ever, for there is not much chance of your getting out of bounds.'

'I am indeed bound over to good behaviour,' said Lord Glenvarloch, with a smile; 'but I hope you will not take advantage of my situation to be too severe on my follies, Richie?'

'God forbid, my lord — God forbid!' replied Richie with an expression betwixt a conceited consciousness of superior wisdom and real feeling, 'especially in consideration of your lordship's having a due sense of them. I did indeed remonstrate, as was my humble duty, but I scorn to cast that up to your lordship now. Na — na, I am myself an erring creature, very conscious of some small weaknesses: there is no perfection in man.'

'But, Richie,' said Lord Glenvarloch, 'although I am much obliged to you for your proffered service, it can be of little use to me here, and may be of prejudice to yourself.'

'Your lordship shall pardon me again,' said Richie, whom the relative situation of the parties had invested with ten times his ordinary dogmatism; 'but, as I will manage the matter, your lordship shall be greatly benefited by my service, and I myself no whit prejudiced.'

'I see not how that can be, my friend,' said Lord Glenvarloch, 'since even as to your pecuniary affairs—'

'Touching my pecuniars, my lord,' replied Richie, 'I am indifferently weel provided; and, as it chances, my living here will be no burden to your lordship or distress to myself. Only I crave permission to annex certain conditions to my servitude with your lordship.'

'Annex what you will,' said Lord Glenvarloch, 'for you are pretty sure to take your own way whether you make any conditions or not. Since you will not leave me, which were, I think, your wisest course, you must, and I suppose will, serve me only on such terms as you like yourself.'

'All that I ask, my lord,' said Richie, gravely, and with a tone of great moderation, 'is to have the uninterrupted command of my own motions, for certain important purposes which I have now in hand, always giving your lordship the solace of my company and attendance at such times as may be at once convenient for me and necessary for your service.'

'Of which, I suppose, you constitute yourself sole judge,' replied Nigel, smiling.

'Unquestionably, my lord,' answered Richie, gravely; 'for your lordship can only know what yourself want; whereas I, who see both sides of the picture, ken both what is the best for your affairs and what is the most needful for my own.'

'Richie, my good friend,' said Nigel, 'I fear this arrangement, which places the master much under the disposal of the servant, would scarce suit us if we were both at large; but a prisoner as I am, I may be as well at your disposal as I am at that of so many other persons; and so you may come and go as you list, for I suppose you will not take my advice, to return to your own country and leave me to my fate.'

'The deil be in my feet if I do,' said Moniplies. 'I am not the lad to leave your lordship in foul weather, when I followed you and fed upon you through the whole summer day. And besides, there may be brave days behind, for a' that has come and gane yet; for

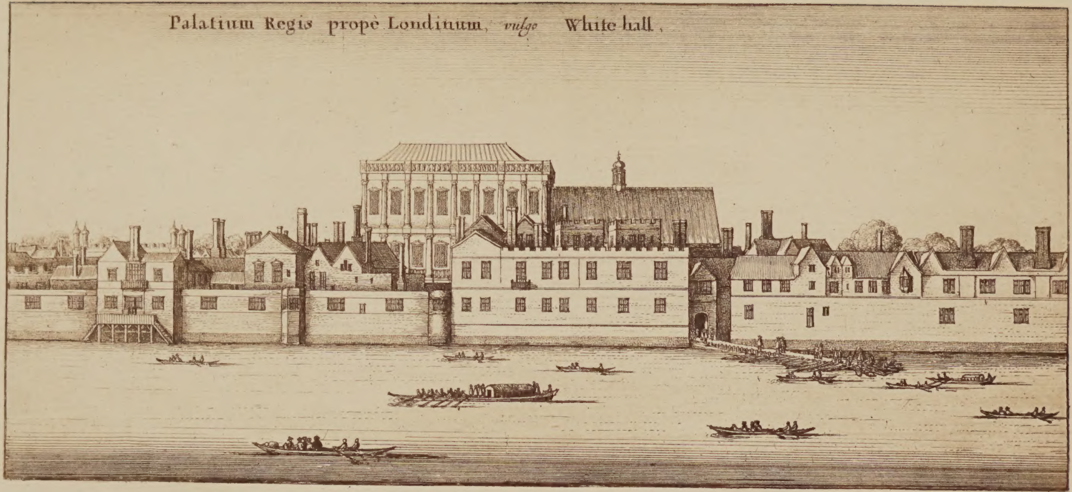
It's hame, and it's hame, and it's hame we fain would be,
Though the cloud is in the lift, and the wind is on the lea;
For the sun through the mirk blinks blithe on mine ee,
Says — "I'll shine on ye yet in your ain country!"'

Having sung this stanza in the manner of a ballad-singer whose voice has been cracked by matching his windpipe against the bugle of the north blast, Richie Moniplies aided Lord Glenvarloch to rise, attended his toilet with every possible mark of the most solemn and deferential respect, then waited upon him at breakfast, and finally withdrew, pleading that he had business of importance, which would detain him for some hours.

Although Lord Glenvarloch necessarily expected to be occasionally annoyed by the self-conceit and dogmatism of Richie Moniplies's character, yet he could not but feel the greatest pleasure from the firm and devoted attachment which this faithful follower had displayed in the present instance, and indeed promised himself an alleviation of the *ennui* of his imprisonment in having the advantage of his services. It was, therefore, with pleasure that he learned from the warder that his servant's attendance would be allowed at all times when the general rules of the fortress permitted the entrance of strangers.

In the meanwhile, the magnanimous Richie Moniplies had already reached Tower Wharf. Here, after looking with contempt on several scullers by whom he was plied, and whose services he rejected with a wave of his hand, he called with dignity, 'First oars!' and stirred into activity several lounging tritons of the higher order, who had not, on his first appearance, thought it worth while to accost him with proffers of service. He now took possession of a wherry, folded his arms within his ample cloak, and sitting down in the stern with an air of importance, commanded them to row to Whitehall Stairs.

Whitehall from the River



Palatium Regis propè Londinum, *vulgo* White hall.

Having reached the palace in safety, he demanded to see Master Linklater, the under-clerk of his Majesty's kitchen. The reply was, that he was not to be spoken withal, being then employed in cooking a mess of cock-a-leekie for the King's own mouth.

'Tell him,' said Moniplies, 'that it is a dear countryman of his who seeks to converse with him on matter of high import.'

'A dear countryman!' said Linklater, when this pressing message was delivered to him. 'Well, let him come in and be d—d, that I should say sae! This now is some red-headed, long-legged, gillie-white-foot frae the West Port, that, hearing of my promotion, is come up to be a turn-broche or deputy scullion through my interest. It is a great hinderance to any man who would rise in the world, to have such friends to hang by his skirts, in hope of being towed up along with him. Ha! Richie Moniplies, man, is it thou? And what has brought ye here? If they should ken thee for the loon that scared the horse the other day —!'

'No more o' that, neighbour,' said Richie. 'I am just here on the auld errand: I maun speak with the King.'

'The King! Ye are red-wud,' said Linklater; then shouted to his assistants in the kitchen, 'Look to the broches, ye knaves. *Pisces purga. Salsamenta fac macerentur pulchre.* I will make you understand Latin, ye knaves, as becomes the scullions of King James.' Then in a cautious tone, to Richie's private ear, he continued, 'Know ye not how ill your master came off the other day? I can tell you that job made some folk shake for their office.'

'Weel, but, Laurie, ye maun befriend me this time, and get this wee bit sifflication slipped into his Majesty's ain most gracious hand. I promise you the contents will be most grateful to him.'

'Richie,' answered Linklater, 'you have certainly sworn to say your prayers in the porter's lodge, with your back bare, and twa grooms, with dog-whips, to cry "amen" to you.'

'Na — na, Laurie, lad,' said Richie, 'I ken better what belangs to sifflications than I did yon day; and ye will say that yoursell, if ye will but get that bit note to the King's hand.'

'I will have neither hand nor foot in the matter,' said the cautious clerk of the kitchen; 'but there is his Majesty's mess of cock-a-leekie just going to be served to him in his closet; I cannot prevent you from putting the letter between the gilt bowl and the platter; his sacred Majesty will see it when he lifts the bowl, for he aye drinks out the broth.'

'Enough said,' replied Richie, and deposited the paper accordingly, just before a page entered to carry away the mess to his Majesty.

'Aweel — aweel, neighbour,' said Laurence, when the mess was taken away, 'if ye have done ony thing to bring yoursell to the withy or the scourging-post, it is your ain wilful deed.'

'I will blame no other for it,' said Richie; and, with that undismayed pertinacity of conceit which made a fundamental part of his character, he abode the issue, which was not long of arriving.

In a few minutes Maxwell himself arrived in the apartment, and demanded hastily who had placed a writing on the King's trencher. Linklater denied all knowledge of it; but Richie Moniplies, stepping boldly forth, pronounced the emphatical confession, 'I am the man.'

'Follow me, then,' said Maxwell, after regarding him with a look of great curiosity.

They went up a private staircase — even that private staircase the privilege of which at court is accounted a nearer road to power than the *grandes entrées* themselves. Arriving in what Richie described as an 'ill redd-up' ante-room, the usher made a sign to him to stop, while he went into the King's closet. Their conference was short, and as Maxwell opened the door to retire, Richie heard the conclusion of it.

'Ye are sure he is not dangerous? I was caught once. Bide within call, but not nearer the door than within three geometrical cubits. If I speak loud, start to me like a falcon. If I speak loun, keep your lang lugs out of ear-shot; and now let him come in.'

Richie passed forward at Maxwell's mute signal, and in a moment found himself in the presence of the King. Most men of Richie's birth and breeding, and many others, would have been abashed at finding themselves alone with their sovereign. But Richie Moniplies had an opinion of himself too high to be controlled by any such ideas; and having made his stiff reverence, he arose once more into his perpendicular height, and stood before James as stiff as a hedge-stake.

'Have ye gotten them, man? — have ye gotten them?' said the King, in a fluttered state, betwixt hope and eagerness, and some touch of suspicious fear. 'Gie me them — gie me them — before ye speak a word, I charge you, on your allegiance.'

Richie took a box from his bosom, and, stooping on one knee, presented it to his Majesty, who hastily opened it, and having ascertained that it contained a certain carcanet of rubies, with which the reader was formerly made acquainted, he could not resist falling into a sort of rapture, kissing the gems, as if they had been capable of feeling, and repeating again and again with childish delight, '*Onyx cum prole, silexque — onyx cum prole!* Ah, my bright and bonny sparklers, my heart loups light to see you again.' He then turned to Richie, upon whose stoical countenance his Majesty's demeanour had excited something like a grim smile, which James interrupted his rejoicing to reprehend, saying, 'Take heed, sir, you are not to laugh at us: we are your anointed sovereign.'

'God forbid that I should laugh!' said Richie, composing his countenance into its natural rigidity. 'I did but smile, to bring my visage into coincidence and conformity with your Majesty's physiognomy.'

'Ye speak as a dutiful subject and an honest man,' said the King; 'but what deil 's your name, man?'

'Even Richie Moniplies, the son of auld Mungo Moniplies, at the West Port of Edinburgh, who had the honour to supply your Majesty's mother's royal table, as weel as your Majesty's, with flesh and other vivers, when time was.'

'Aha!' said the King, laughing; for he possessed, as a useful attribute of his situation, a tenacious memory, which recollected every one with whom he was brought into casual contact — 'ye are the self-same traitor who had weelnigh coupit us endlang on the causey of our ain courtyard? But we stuck by our mare. *Equam memento* *rebus in arduis servare.* Weel, be not dismayed, Richie; for, as many men have turned traitors, it is but fair that a traitor, now and then, suld prove to be, *contra expectanda*, a true man. How cam ye by our jewels, man? cam ye on the part of George Heriot?'

'In no sort,' said Richie. 'May it please your Majesty, I come as Harry Wynd fought, utterly for my own hand, and on no man's errand; as, indeed, I call no one master, save Him that made me, your most gracious Majesty who governs me, and the noble Nigel Olifaunt, Lord of Glenvarloch, who maintained me as lang as he could maintain himself, poor nobleman!'

'Glenvarlochides again!' exclaimed the King; 'by my honour, he lies in ambush for us at every corner! Maxwell knocks at the door. It is George Heriot come to tell us he cannot find these jewels. Get thee behind the arras, Richie — stand close, man — sneeze not — cough not — breathe not! Jingling Geordie is so damnably ready with his gold-ends of wisdom, and sae accursedly backward with his gold-ends of siller, that, by our royal saul, we are glad to get a hair in his neck.'

Richie got behind the arras, in obedience to the commands of the good-natured King, while the monarch, who never allowed his dignity to stand in the way of a frolic, having adjusted, with his own hand, the tapestry so as to complete the ambush, commanded Maxwell to tell him what was the matter without. Maxwell's reply was so low as to be lost by Richie Moniplies, the peculiarity of whose situation by no means abated his curiosity and desire to gratify it to the uttermost.

'Let Geordie Heriot come in,' said the King; and, as Richie could observe through a slit in the tapestry, the honest citizen, if not actually agitated, was at least discomposed. The King, whose talent for wit, or humour, was precisely of a kind to be gratified by such a scene as ensued, received his homage with coldness, and began to talk to him with an air of serious dignity, very different from the usual indecorous levity of his behaviour. 'Master Heriot,' he said, 'if we aright remember, we opignorated in your hands certain jewels of the crown, for a certain sum of money. Did we or did we not?'

'My most gracious sovereign,' said Heriot, 'indisputably your Majesty was pleased to do so.'

'The property of which jewels and *cimelia* remained with us,' continued the King, in the same solemn tone, 'subject only to your claim of advance thereupon; which advance being repaid gives us right to repossession of the thing opignorated, or pledged, or laid in wad. Voetius, Vinnius, Groenwigeneus, Pagenstecherus — all who have treated *de contractu opignerationis* — *consentiunt in eundem* — gree on the same point. The Roman law, the English common law, and the municipal law of our ain ancient kingdom of Scotland, though they split in mair particulars than I could desire, unite as strictly in this as the three strands of a twisted rope.'

'May it please your Majesty,' replied Heriot, 'it requires not so many learned authorities to prove to any honest man that his interest in a pledge is determined when the money lent is restored.'

'Weel, sir, I proffer restoration of the sum lent, and I demand to be repossessed of the jewels pledged with you. I gave ye a hint, brief while since, that this would be essential to my service, for, as approaching events are like to call us into public, it would seem strange if we did not appear with those ornaments, which are heirlooms of the crown, and the absence whereof is like to place us in contempt and suspicion with our liege subjects.'

Master George Heriot seemed much moved by this address of his sovereign, and replied with emotion, 'I call Heaven to witness, that I am totally harmless in this matter, and that I would willingly lose the sum advanced, so that I could restore those jewels, the absence of which your Majesty so justly laments. Had the jewels remained with me, the account of them would be easily rendered; but your Majesty will do me the justice to remember that, by your express order, I transferred them to another person, who advanced a large sum, just about the time of my departure for Paris. The money was pressingly wanted, and no other means to come by it occurred to me. I told your Majesty, when I brought the needful supply, that the man from whom the monies were obtained was of no good repute; and your most princely answer was, smelling to the gold — "*Non olet* — it smells not of the means that have gotten it."'

'Weel, man,' said the King, 'but what needs a' this din? If ye gave my jewels in pledge to such a one, suld ye not, as a liege subject, have taken care that the redemption was in our power? And are we to suffer the loss of our *cimelia* by your neglect, besides being exposed to the scorn and censure of our lieges and of the foreign ambassadors?'

'My lord and liege king,' said Heriot, 'God knows, if my bearing blame or shame in this matter would keep it from your Majesty, it were my duty to endure both, as a servant grateful for many benefits; but when your Majesty considers the violent death of the man himself, the disappearance of his daughter and of his wealth, I trust you will remember that I warned your Majesty, in humble duty, of the possibility of such casualties, and prayed you not to urge me to deal with him on your behalf.'

'But you brought me nae better means,' said the King — 'Geordie, ye brought me nae better means. I was like a deserted man; what could I do but grip to the first siller that offered, as a drowning man grasps to the willow-wand that comes readiest? And now, man, what for have ye not brought back the jewels? They are surely above ground, if ye wad make strict search.'

'All strict search has been made, may it please your Majesty,' replied the citizen: 'hue and cry has been sent out everywhere, and it has been found impossible to recover them.'

'Difficult, ye mean, Geordie, not impossible,' replied the King; 'for that whilk is impossible is either naturally so, *exempli gratiâ,* to make two into three; or morally so, as to make what is truth falsehood; but what is only difficult may come to pass, with assistance of wisdom and patience; as, for example, Jingling Geordie, look here!' And he displayed the recovered treasure to the eyes of the astonished jeweller, exclaiming, with great triumph, 'What say ye to that, Jingler? By my sceptre and crown, the man stares as if he took his native prince for a warlock! us that are the very *malleus maleficarum,* the contunding and contriturating hammer of all witches, sorcerers, magicians, and the like; he thinks we are taking a touch of the black art oursells! But gang thy way, honest Geordie; thou art a good plain man, but nane of the seven sages of Greece — gang thy way, and mind the soothfast word which you spoke, small time syne, that there is one in this land that comes near to Solomon, King of Israel, in all his gifts, except in his love to strange women, forbye the daughter of Pharaoh.'

If Heriot was surprised at seeing the jewels so unexpectedly produced at the moment the King was upbraiding him for the loss of them, this allusion to the reflection which had escaped him while conversing with Lord Glenvarloch altogether completed his astonishment; and the King was so delighted with the superiority which it gave him at the moment, that he rubbed his hands, chuckled, and, finally, his sense of dignity giving way to the full feeling of triumph, he threw himself into his easy-chair, and laughed with unconstrained violence till he lost his breath, and the tears ran plentifully down his cheeks as he strove to recover it. Meanwhile, the royal cachinnation was echoed out by a discordant and portentous laugh from behind the arras, like that of one who, little accustomed to give way to such emotions, feels himself at some particular impulse unable either to control or to modify his obstreperous mirth. Heriot turned his head with new surprise towards the place from which sounds so unfitting the presence of a monarch seemed to burst with such emphatic clamour.[1]

The King, too, somewhat sensible of the indecorum, rose up, wiped his eyes, and calling, 'Tod Lowrie, come out o' your den,' he produced from behind the arras the length of Richie Moniplies, still laughing with as unrestrained mirth as ever did gossip at a country christening. 'Whisht, man — whisht, man,' said the King; 'ye needna nicher that gait, like a cusser at a caup o' corn, e'en though it was a pleasing jest, and our ain framing.

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[1] See Note 12.

And yet to see Jingling Geordie, that hauds himself so much the wiser than other folk — to see him — ha! ha! ha! — in the vein of Euclio apud Plautum, distressing himself to recover what was lying at his elbow —

Perii, interii, occidi — quo curram? quo non curram? —
Tene, tene — quem? quis? nescio — nihil video.

Ah! Geordie, your een are sharp enough to look after gowd and silver, gems, rubies, and the like of that, and yet ye kenna how to come by them when they are lost. Ay — ay, look at them, man — look at them; they are a' right and tight, sound and round, not a doublet crept in amongst them.'

George Heriot, when his first surprise was over, was too old a courtier to interrupt the King's imaginary triumph, although he darted a look of some displeasure at honest Richie, who still continued on what is usually termed the broad grin. He quietly examined the stones, and finding them all perfect, he honestly and sincerely congratulated his Majesty on the recovery of a treasure which could not have been lost without some dishonour to the crown; and asked to whom he himself was to pay the sums for which they had been pledged, observing that he had the money by him in readiness.

'Ye are in a deevil of a hurry, when there is paying in the case, Geordie,' said the King. 'What's a' the haste, man? The jewels were restored by an honest, kindly countryman of ours. There he stands, and wha kens if he wants the money on the nail, or if he might not be as weel pleased wi' a bit rescript on our treasury some six months hence? Ye ken that our exchequer is even at a low ebb just now, and ye cry "pay — pay — pay," as if we had all the mines of Ophir.'

'Please your Majesty,' said Heriot, 'if this man has the real right to these monies, it is doubtless at his will to grant forbearance, if he will. But when I remember the guise in which I first saw him, with a tattered cloak and a broken head, I can hardly conceive it. Are not you Richie Moniplies, with the King's favour?'

'Even sae, Master Heriot — of the ancient and honourable house of Castle Collop, near to the West Port of Edinburgh,' answered Richie.

'Why, please your Majesty, he is a poor serving-man,' said Heriot. 'This money can never be honestly at his disposal.'

'What for no?' said the King. 'Wad ye have naebody spraickle up the brae but yoursell, Geordie? Your ain cloak was thin enough when ye cam here, though ye have lined it gay and weel. And for serving-men, there has mony a red-shank come over the Tweed wi' his master's wallet on his shoulders, that now rustles it wi' his six followers behind him. There stands the man himsell; speer at him, Geordie.'

'His may not be the best authority in the case,' answered the cautious citizen.

'Tut — tut, man,' said the King, 'ye are over scrupulous. The knave deer-stealers have an apt phrase, "*Non est inquirendum unde venit* VENISON." He that brings the gudes hath surely a right to dispose of the gear. Hark ye, friend, speak the truth and shame the deil. Have ye plenary powers to dispose on the redemption-money as to delay of payments or the like, ay or no?'

'Full power, an it like your gracious Majesty,' answered Richie Moniplies; 'and I am maist willing to subscrive to whatsoever may in ony wise accommodate your Majesty anent the redemption-money, trusting your Majesty's grace will be kind to me in one sma' favour.'

'Ey, man,' said the King, 'come ye to me there? I thought ye wad e'en be like the rest of them. One would think our subjects' lives and goods were all our ain, and holden of us at our free will; but when we stand in need of ony matter of siller from them, which chances more frequently than we would it did, deil a boddle is to be had, save on the auld terms of giff-gaff. It is just niffer for niffer. Aweel, neighbour, what is it that ye want — some monopoly, I reckon? Or it may be a grant of kirk lands and teinds, or a knighthood, or the like? Ye maun be reasonable, unless ye propose to advance more money for our present occasions.'

'My liege,' answered Richie Moniplies, 'the owner of these monies places them at your Majesty's command, free of all pledge or usage as long as it is your royal pleasure, providing your Majesty will condescend to show some favour to the noble Lord Glenvarloch, presently prisoner in your royal Tower of London.'

'How, man — how, man — how, man!' exclaimed the King, reddening and stammering, but with emotions more noble than those by which he was sometimes agitated. 'What is that you dare to say to us? Sell our justice! — sell our mercy! and we a crowned king, sworn to do justice to our subjects in the gate, and responsible for our stewardship to Him that is over all kings?' Here he reverently looked up, touched his bonnet, and continued, with some sharpness — 'We dare not traffic in such commodities, sir; and, but that ye are a poor ignorant creature, that have done us this day some not unpleasant service, we wad have a red iron driven through your tongue, *in terrorem* of others. Awa' with him, Geordie; pay him, plack and bawbee, out of our monies in your hands, and let them care that come ahint.'

Richie, who had counted with the utmost certainty upon the success of this master-stroke of policy, was like an architect whose whole scaffolding at once gives way under him. He caught, however, at what he thought might break his fall. 'Not only the sum for which the jewels were pledged,' he said, 'but the double of it, if required, should be placed at his Majesty's command, and even without hope or condition of repayment, if only —'

But the King did not allow him to complete the sentence, crying out with greater vehemence than before, as if he dreaded the stability of his own good resolutions — 'Awa' wi' him — swith awa' wi' him! It is time he were gane, if he doubles his bode that gate. And, for your life, letna Steenie or ony of them hear a word from his mouth; for wha kens what trouble that might bring me into! *Ne inducas in tentationem. Vade retro, Sathanas! Amen.*'

In obedience to the royal mandate, George Heriot hurried the abashed petitioner out of the presence and out of the palace; and, when they were in the palace-yard, the citizen, remembering with some resentment the airs of equality which Richie had assumed towards him in the commencement of the scene which had just taken place, could not forbear to retaliate, by congratulating him with an ironical smile on his favour at court, and his improved grace in presenting a supplication.

'Never fash your beard about that, Master George

Heriot,' said Richie, totally undismayed; 'but tell me when and where I am to sifflicate you for eight hundred pounds sterling, for which these jewels stood engaged?'

'The instant that you bring with you the real owner of the money,' replied Heriot; 'whom it is important that I should see on more accounts than one.'

'Then will I back to his Majesty,' said Richie Moniplies, stoutly, 'and get either the money or the pledge back again. I am fully commissionate to act in that matter.'

'It may be so, Richie,' said the citizen, 'and perchance it may *not* be so neither, for your tales are not all gospel; and, therefore, be assured I will see that it *is* so ere I pay you that large sum of money. I shall give you an acknowledgment for it, and I will keep it prestable at a moment's warning. But, my good Richard Moniplies of Castle Collop, near the West Port of Edinburgh, in the mean time I am bound to return to his Majesty on matters of weight.' So speaking, and mounting the stair to reënter the palace, he added, by way of summing up the whole — 'George Heriot is over old a cock to be caught with chaff.'

Richie stood petrified when he beheld him reënter the palace, and found himself, as he supposed, left in the lurch. 'Now, plague on ye,' he muttered, 'for a cunning auld skinflint! that, because ye are an honest man yoursell, forsooth, must needs deal with all the world as if they were knaves. But deil be in me if ye beat me yet! Gude guide us! yonder comes Laurie Linklater next, and he will be on me about the sifflication. I winna stand him, by St. Andrew!'

So saying, and changing the haughty stride with which he had that morning entered the precincts of the palace into a skulking shamble, he retreated for his wherry, which was in attendance, with speed which, to use the approved phrase on such occasions, greatly resembled a flight.

CHAPTER XXXII

Benedict. This looks not like a nuptial.
Much Ado about Nothing.

Master George Heriot had no sooner returned to the King's apartment than James inquired of Maxwell if the Earl of Huntinglen was in attendance, and, receiving an answer in the affirmative, desired that he should be admitted. The old Scottish lord having made his reverence in the usual manner, the King extended his hand to be kissed, and then began to address him in a tone of great sympathy.

'We told your lordship in our secret epistle of this morning, written with our ain hand, in testimony we have neither pretermitted nor forgotten your faithful service, that we had that to communicate to you that would require both patience and fortitude to endure, and therefore exhorted you to peruse some of the most pithy passages of Seneca, and of Boethius, "De Consolatione," that the back may be, as we say, fitted for the burden. This we commend to you from our ain experience.

> Non ignara mali, miseris succurrere disco,

sayeth Dido, and I might say in my own person, *non ignarus;* but to change the gender would affect the prosody, whereof our southern subjects are tenacious. So, my Lord of Huntinglen, I trust you have acted by our advice, and studied patience before ye need it. *Venienti occurrite morbo:* mix the medicament when the disease is coming on.'

'May it please your Majesty,' answered Lord Huntinglen, 'I am more of an old soldier than a scholar; and if my own rough nature will not bear me out in any calamity, I hope I shall have grace to try a text of Scripture to boot.'

'Ay, man, are you there with your bears?' said the King; 'the Bible, man (touching his cap), is indeed *principium et fons;* but it is pity your lordship cannot peruse it in the original. For although we did ourselves promote that work of translation — since ye may read, at the beginning of every Bible, that, when some palpable clouds of darkness were thought like to have overshadowed the land, after the setting of that bright occidental star, Queen Elizabeth; yet our appearance, like that of the sun in his strength, instantly dispelled these surmised mists — I say that, although, as therein mentioned, we countenanced the preaching of the Gospel, and especially the translation of the Scriptures out of the original sacred tongues; yet, nevertheless, we ourselves confess to have found a comfort in consulting them in the original Hebrew whilk we do not perceive even in the Latin version of the Septuagint, much less in the English traduction.'

'Please your Majesty,' said Lord Huntinglen, 'if your Majesty delays communicating the bad news with which your honoured letter threatens me until I am capable to read Hebrew like your Majesty, I fear I shall die in ignorance of the misfortune which hath befallen, or is about to befall, my house.'

'You will learn it but too soon, my lord,' replied the King. 'I grieve to say it, but your son Dalgarno, whom I thought a very saint, as he was so much with

Steenie and Baby Charles, hath turned out a very villain.'

'Villain!' repeated Lord Huntinglen; and though he instantly checked himself, and added, 'but it is your Majesty speaks the word,' the effect of his first tone made the King step back as if he had received a blow. He also recovered himself again, and said in the pettish way which usually indicated his displeasure — 'Yes, my lord, it was we that said it. *Non surdo canis:* we are not deaf, we pray you not to raise your voice in speech with us. There is the bonny memorial; read and judge for yourself.'

The King then thrust into the old nobleman's hand a paper, containing the story of the Lady Hermione, with the evidence by which it was supported, detailed so briefly and clearly that the infamy of Lord Dalgarno, the lover by whom she had been so shamefully deceived, seemed undeniable.

But a father yields not up so easily the cause of his son. 'May it please your Majesty,' he said, 'why was this tale not sooner told? This woman hath been here for years; wherefore was the claim on my son not made the instant she touched English ground?'

'Tell him how that came about, Geordie,' said the King, addressing Heriot.

'I grieve to distress my Lord Huntinglen,' said Heriot; 'but I must speak the truth. For a long time the Lady Hermione could not brook the idea of making her situation public; and when her mind became changed in that particular, it was necessary to recover the evidence of the false marriage, and letters and papers connected with it, which, when she came to Paris, and just before

I saw her, she had deposited with a correspondent of her father in that city. He became afterwards bankrupt, and in consequence of that misfortune the lady's papers passed into other hands, and it was only a few days since I traced and recovered them. Without these documents of evidence, it would have been imprudent for her to have preferred her complaint, favoured as Lord Dalgarno is by powerful friends.'

'Ye are saucy to say sae,' said the King; 'I ken what ye mean weel eneugh: ye think Steenie wad hae putten the weight of his foot into the scales of justice, and garr'd them whomle the bucket; ye forget, Geordie, wha it is whose hand uphaulds them. And ye do poor Steenie the mair wrang, for he confessed at ance before us and our privy council that Dalgarno would have put the quean aff on him, the puir simple bairn, making him trow that she was a light o' love; in whilk mind he remained assured even when he parted from her, albeit Steenie might hae weel thought ane of thae cattle wadna hae resisted the like of him.'

'The Lady Hermione,' said George Heriot, 'has always done the utmost justice to the conduct of the Duke, who, although strongly possessed with prejudice against her character, yet scorned to avail himself of her distress, and on the contrary supplied her with the means of extricating herself from her difficulties.'

'It was e'en like himsell — blessings on his bonny face!' said the King; 'and I believed this lady's tale the mair readily, my Lord Huntinglen, that she spake nae ill of Steenie; and to make a lang tale short, my lord, it is the opinion of our council and ourself, as weel as of Baby Charles and Steenie, that your son maun amend his wrong by wedding this lady, or undergo such disgrace and discountenance as we can bestow.'

The person to whom he spoke was incapable of answering him. He stood before the King motionless, and glaring with eyes of which even the lids seemed immovable, as if suddenly converted into an ancient statue of the times of chivalry, so instantly had his hard features and strong limbs been arrested into rigidity by the blow he had received. And in a second afterwards, like the same statue when the lightning breaks upon it, he sunk at once to the ground with a heavy groan.

The King was in the utmost alarm, called upon Heriot and Maxwell for help, and, presence of mind not being his *forte*, ran to and fro in his cabinet, exclaiming — 'My ancient and beloved servant — who saved our anointed self! *Væ atque dolor!* My Lord of Huntinglen, look up — look up, man, and your son may marry the Queen of Sheba if he will.'

By this time Maxwell and Heriot had raised the old nobleman and placed him on a chair; while the King, observing that he began to recover himself, continued his consolations more methodically.

'Haud up your head — haud up your head, and listen to your ain kind native prince. If there is shame, man, it comesna empty-handed: there is siller to gild it — a gude tocher, and no that bad a pedigree; if she has been a loon, it was your son made her sae, and he can make her an honest woman again.'

These suggestions, however reasonable in the common case, gave no comfort to Lord Huntinglen, if indeed he fully comprehended them; but the blubbering of his good-natured old master, which began to accompany and interrupt his royal speech, produced more rapid effect. The large tear gushed reluctantly from his eye, as he kissed the withered hands, which the King, weeping with less dignity and restraint, abandoned to him, first alternately and then both together, until the feelings of the man getting entirely the better of the sovereign's sense of dignity, he grasped and shook Lord Huntinglen's hands with the sympathy of an equal and a familiar friend.

'*Compone lachrymas,*' said the monarch — 'be patient, man — be patient. The council, and Baby Charles, and Steenie may a' gang to the deevil; he shall not marry her since it moves you so deeply.'

'He SHALL marry her, by God!' answered the earl, drawing himself up, dashing the tear from his eyes, and endeavouring to recover his composure. 'I pray your Majesty's pardon, but he shall marry her, with her dishonour for her dowry, were she the veriest courtezan in all Spain. If he gave his word, he shall make his word good, were it to the meanest creature that haunts the streets; he shall do it, or my own dagger shall take the life that I gave him. If he could stoop to use so base a fraud, though to deceive infamy, let him wed infamy.'

'No — no!' the monarch continued to insinuate, 'things are not so bad as that: Steenie himself never thought of her being a street-walker, even when he thought the worst of her.'

'If it can at all console my Lord of Huntinglen,' said the citizen, 'I can assure him of this lady's good birth and most fair and unspotted fame.'

'I am sorry for it,' said Lord Huntinglen; then interrupting himself, he said — 'Heaven forgive me for being ungrateful for such comfort! but I am wellnigh sorry she should be as you represent her — so much better than the villain deserves. To be condemned to wed beauty and innocence and honest birth —'

'Ay, and wealth, my lord — wealth,' insinuated the King — 'is a better sentence than his perfidy has deserved.'

'It is long,' said the embittered father, 'since I saw he was selfish and hard-hearted; but to be a perjured liar — I never dreaded that such a blot would have fallen on my race! I will never look on him again.'

'Hoot ay, my lord — hoot ay,' said the King; 'ye maun tak him to task roundly. I grant you should speak more in the vein of Demea than Mitio, *vi nempe et via pervulgata patrum;* but as for not seeing him again, and he your only son, that is altogether out of reason. I tell ye, man, — but I would not for a boddle that Baby Charles heard me, — that *he* might gie the glaiks to half the lasses of Lonnun, ere I could find in my heart to speak such harsh words as you have said of this deil of a Dalgarno of yours.'

'May it please your Majesty to permit me to retire,' said Lord Huntinglen; 'and dispose of the case according to your own royal sense of justice, for I desire no favour for him.'

'Aweel, my lord, so be it; and if your lordship can think,' added the monarch, 'of anything in our power which might comfort you —'

'Your Majesty's gracious sympathy,' said Lord Huntinglen, 'has already comforted me as far as earth can; the rest must be from the King of kings.'

'To Him I commend you, my auld and faithful servant,' said James with emotion, as the earl withdrew from his presence. The King remained fixed in thought for some time, and then said to Heriot, 'Jingling Geordie, ye ken all the privy doings of our court, and have dune so these thirty years, though, like a wise man, ye hear, and see, and say nothing. Now, there is a thing I fain wad ken, in the way of philosophical inquiry: Did you ever hear of the umquhile Lady Huntinglen, the departed countess of this noble earl, ganging a wee bit gleed in her walk through the world; I mean in the way of slipping a foot, casting a leglin-girth [1] or the like, ye understand me?'

'On my word as an honest man,' said George Heriot, somewhat surprised at the question, 'I never heard her wronged by the slightest breath of suspicion. She was a worthy lady, very circumspect in her walk, and lived in great concord with her husband, save that the good countess was something of a Puritan, and kept more company with ministers than was altogether agreeable to Lord Huntinglen, who is, as your Majesty well knows, a man of the old rough world, that will drink and swear.'

'O Geordie!' exclaimed the King, 'these are auld-warld frailties, of whilk we dare not pronounce even ourselves absolutely free. But the warld grows worse from day to day, Geordie. The juveniles of this age may weel say with the poet —

Ætas parentum, pejor avis, tulit
Nos nequiores —

This Dalgarno does not drink so much or swear so much as his father; but he wenches, Geordie, and he breaks his word and oath baith. As to what you say of the leddy and the ministers, we are a' fallible creatures, Geordie, priests and kings, as weel as others; and wha kens but what that may account for the difference between this Dalgarno and his father? The earl is the vera soul of honour, and cares nae mair for warld's gear than a noble hound for the quest of a foulmart; but as for his son, he was like to brazen us a' out — ourselves, Steenie, Baby Charles, and our council — till he heard of the tocher, and then, by my kingly crown, he lap like a cock at a grossart! These are discrepancies betwixt parent and son not to be accounted for naturally, according to Baptista Porta, Michael Scott "De secretis," and others. Ah, Jingling Geordie, if your clouting the caldron, and jingling on pots, pans, and veshels of all manner of metal, hadna jingled a' your grammar out of your head, I could have touched on that matter to you at mair length.'

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[1] See Note 13.

Heriot was too plain-spoken to express much concern for the loss of his grammar learning on this occasion; but after modestly hinting that he had seen many men who could not fill their father's bonnet, though no one had been suspected of wearing their father's night-cap, he inquired 'whether Lord Dalgarno had consented to do the Lady Hermione justice.'

'Troth, man, I have small doubt that he will,' quoth the King, 'I gave him the schedule of her worldly substance, which you delivered to us in the council, and we allowed him half an hour to chew the cud upon that. It is rare reading for bringing him to reason. I left Baby Charles and Steenie laying his duty before him; and if he can resist doing what *they* desire him — why, I wish he would teach *me* the gate of it. O Geordie — Jingling Geordie, it was grand to hear Baby Charles laying down the guilt of dissimulation, and Steenie lecturing on the turpitude of incontinence!'

'I am afraid,' said George Heriot, more hastily than prudently, 'I might have thought of the old proverb of Satan reproving sin.'

'Deil hae our saul, neighbour,' said the King, reddening, 'but ye are not blate! I gie ye license to speak freely, and, by our saul, ye do not let the privilege become lost *non utendo;* it will suffer no negative prescription in your hands. Is it fit, think ye, that Baby Charles should let his thoughts be publicly seen? No — no, princes' thoughts are *arcana imperii. Qui nescit dissimulare nescit regnare.* Every liege subject is bound to speak the whole truth to the king, but there is nae reciprocity of obligation. And for Steenie having been whiles a dike-louper at a time, is it for you, who are his goldsmith, and to whom, I doubt, he awes an uncomeatable sum, to cast that up to him?'

Heriot did not feel himself called on to play the part of Zeno, and sacrifice himself for upholding the cause of moral truth; he did not desert it, however, by disavowing his words, but simply expressed sorrow for having offended his Majesty, with which the placable king was sufficiently satisfied.

'And now, Geordie, man,' quoth he, 'we will to this culprit, and hear what he has to say for himself, for I will see the job cleared this blessed day. Ye maun come wi' me, for your evidence may be wanted.'

The King led the way, accordingly, into a larger apartment, where the Prince, the Duke of Buckingham, and one or two privy councillors were seated at a table, before which stood Lord Dalgarno, in an attitude of as much elegant ease and indifference as could be expressed, considering the stiff dress and manners of the times.

All rose and bowed reverently, while the King, to use a North-Country word expressive of his mode of locomotion, 'toddled' to his chair or throne, making a sign to Heriot to stand behind him.

'We hope,' said his Majesty, 'that Lord Dalgarno stands prepared to do justice to this unfortunate lady, and to his own character and honour?'

'May I humbly inquire the penalty,' said Lord Dalgarno, 'in case I should unhappily find compliance with your Majesty's demands impossible?'

'Banishment frae our court, my lord,' said the King — 'frae our court and our countenance.'

'Unhappy exile that I may be!' said Lord Dalgarno, in a tone of subdued irony, 'I will at least carry your Majesty's picture with me, for I shall never see such another king.'

'And banishment, my lord,' said the Prince, sternly, 'from these our dominions.'

'That must be by form of law, please your Royal Highness,' said Dalgarno, with an affectation of deep respect; 'and I have not heard that there is a statute compelling us, under such penalty, to marry every woman we may play the fool with. Perhaps his Grace of Buckingham can tell me.'

'You are a villain, Dalgarno,' said the haughty and vehement favourite.

'Fie, my lord — fie! to a prisoner, and in presence of your royal and paternal gossip!' said Lord Dalgarno. 'But I will cut this deliberation short. I have looked over this schedule of the goods and effects of Erminia Pauletti, daughter of the late noble — yes, he is called the noble, or I read wrong — Giovanni Pauletti, of the house of Sansovino, in Genoa, and of the no less noble Lady Maud Olifaunt, of the house of Glenvarloch. Well, I declare that I was pre-contracted in Spain to this noble lady, and there has passed betwixt us some certain *prælibatio matrimonii;* and now, what more does this grave assembly require of me?'

'That you should repair the gross and infamous wrong you have done the lady by marrying her within this hour,' said the Prince.

'O, may it please your Royal Highness,' answered Dalgarno, 'I have a trifling relationship with an old earl, who calls himself my father, who may claim some vote in the matter. Alas! every son is not blessed with an obedient parent!' He hazarded a slight glance towards the throne, to give meaning to his last words.

'We have spoken ourselves with Lord Huntinglen,' said the King, 'and are authorised to consent in his name.'

'I could never have expected this intervention of a *proxeneta*, which the vulgar translate blackfoot, of such eminent dignity,' said Dalgarno, scarce concealing a sneer. 'And my father hath consented? He was wont to say, ere we left Scotland, that the blood of Huntinglen and of Glenvarloch would not mingle, were they poured into the same basin. Perhaps he has a mind to try the experiment?'

'My lord,' said James, 'we will not be longer trifled with. Will you instantly, and *sine mora*, take this lady to your wife, in our chapel?'

'*Statim atque instanter*,' answered Lord Dalgarno; 'for I perceive by doing so I shall obtain power to render great services to the commonwealth: I shall have acquired wealth to supply the wants of your Majesty, and a fair wife to be at the command of his Grace of Buckingham.'

The duke rose, passed to the end of the table where Lord Dalgarno was standing, and whispered in his ear, 'You have placed a fair sister at my command ere now.'

This taunt cut deep through Lord Dalgarno's assumed composure. He started as if an adder had stung him, but instantly composed himself, and, fixing on the duke's still smiling countenance an eye which spoke unutterable hatred, he pointed the forefinger of his left hand to the hilt of his sword, but in a manner which could scarce be observed by any one save Buckingham. The duke gave him another smile of bitter scorn, and returned to his seat, in obedience to the commands of the King, who continued calling out, 'Sit down, Steenie — sit down, I command ye; we will hae nae barns-breaking here.'

'Your Majesty needs not fear my patience,' said Lord Dalgarno; 'and that I may keep it the better, I will not utter another word in this presence, save those enjoined to me in that happy portion of the Prayer Book which begins with "Dearly Beloved," and ends with "amazement."'

'You are a hardened villain, Dalgarno,' said the King; 'and were I the lass, by my father's saul, I would rather brook the stain of having been your concubine than run the risk of becoming your wife. But she shall be under our special protection. Come, my lords, we will ourselves see this blythesome bridal.' He gave the signal by rising, and moved towards the door, followed by the train. Lord Dalgarno attended, speaking to none, and spoken to by no one, yet seeming as easy and unembarrassed in his gait and manner as if in reality a happy bridegroom.

They reached the chapel by a private entrance, which communicated from the royal apartment. The Bishop of Winchester, in his pontifical dress, stood beside the altar; on the other side, supported by Monna Paula, the colourless, faded, half-lifeless form of the Lady Hermione, or Erminia, Pauletti. Lord Dalgarno bowed profoundly to her, and the Prince, observing the horror with which she regarded him, walked up and said to her, with much dignity, 'Madam, ere you put yourself under the authority of this man, let me inform you, he hath in the fullest degree vindicated your honour, so far as concerns your former intercourse. It is for you to consider whether you will put your fortune and happiness into the hands of one who has shown himself unworthy of all trust.'

The lady, with much difficulty, found words to make reply. 'I owe to his Majesty's goodness,' she said, 'the care of providing me some reservation out of my own fortune for my decent sustenance. The rest cannot be better disposed than in buying back the fair fame of which I am deprived, and the liberty of ending my life in peace and seclusion.'

'The contract has been drawn up,' said the King, 'under our own eye, specially discharging the *potestas maritalis*, and agreeing they shall live separate. So buckle them, my lord bishop, as fast as you can, that they may sunder again the sooner.'

The bishop accordingly opened his book, and commenced the marriage ceremony, under circumstances so novel and so inauspicious. The responses of the bride were only expressed by inclinations of the head and body; while those of the bridegroom were spoken boldly and distinctly, with a tone resembling levity, if not scorn. When it was concluded, Lord Dalgarno advanced as if to salute the bride, but seeing that she drew back in fear and abhorrence, he contented himself with making her a low bow. He then drew up his form to its height, and stretched himself as if examining the power of his limbs, but elegantly, and without any forcible change of attitude. 'I could caper yet,' he said, 'though I am in fetters; but they are of gold, and lightly worn. Well, I see all eyes look cold on me, and it is time I should withdraw. The sun shines elsewhere than in England! But first I must ask how this fair Lady Dalgarno is to be bestowed. Methinks it is but decent I should know. Is she to be sent to the haram of my lord duke? Or is this worthy citizen, as before —'

'Hold thy base ribald tongue!' said his father, Lord Huntinglen, who had kept in the background during the ceremony, and now stepping suddenly forward, caught the lady by the arm, and confronted her unworthy husband. 'The Lady Dalgarno,' he continued, 'shall remain as a widow in my house. A widow I esteem her, as much as if the grave had closed over her dishonoured husband.'

Lord Dalgarno exhibited momentary symptoms of extreme confusion, and said, in a submissive tone, 'If you, my lord, can wish me dead, I cannot, though your heir, return the compliment. Few of the first-born of Israel,' he added, recovering himself from the single touch of emotion he had displayed, 'can say so much with truth. But I will convince you ere I go that I am a true descendant of a house famed for its memory of injuries.'

'I marvel your Majesty will listen to him longer,' said Prince Charles. 'Methinks we have heard enough of his daring insolence.'

But James, who took the interest of a true gossip in such a scene as was now passing, could not bear to cut the controversy short, but imposed silence on his son with, 'Whisht, Baby Charles — there is a good bairn, whisht! I want to hear what the frontless loon can say.'

'Only, sir,' said Dalgarno, 'that but for one single line in this schedule, all else that it contains could not have bribed me to take that woman's hand into mine.'

'That line maun have been the *summa totalis*,' said the King.

'Not so, sire,' replied Dalgarno. 'The sum total might indeed have been an object for consideration even to a Scottish king, at no very distant period; but it would have had little charms for me, save that I see here an entry which gives me the power of vengeance over the family of Glenvarloch; and learn from it that yonder pale bride, when she put the wedding-torch into my hand, gave me the power of burning her mother's house to ashes!'

'How is that?' said the King. 'What is he speaking about, Jingling Geordie?'

'This friendly citizen, my liege,' said Lord Dalgarno, 'hath expended a sum belonging to my lady, and now, I thank Heaven, to me, in acquiring a certain mortgage, or wadset, over the estate of Glenvarloch, which, if it be not redeemed before to-morrow at noon, will put me in possession of the fair demesnes of those who once called themselves our house's rivals.'

'Can this be true?' said the King.

'It is even but too true, please your Majesty,' answered the citizen. 'The Lady Hermione having advanced the money for the original creditor, I was obliged, in honour and honesty, to take the rights to her; and, doubtless, they pass to her husband.'

'But the warrant, man,' said the King — 'the warrant on our exchequer. Couldna that supply the lad wi' the means of redemption?'

'Unhappily, my liege, he has lost it, or disposed of it. It is not to be found. He is the most unlucky youth!'

'This is a proper spot of work!' said the King, beginning to amble about and play with the points of his doublet and hose, in expression of dismay. 'We cannot aid him without paying our debts twice over, and we have, in the present state of our exchequer, scarce the means of paying them once.'

'You have told me news,' said Lord Dalgarno, 'but I will take no advantage.'

'Do not,' said his father. 'Be a bold villain, since thou must be one, and seek revenge with arms, and not with the usurer's weapons.'

'Pardon me, my lord,' said Lord Dalgarno. 'Pen and ink are now my surest means of vengeance; and more land is won by the lawyer with the ram-skin than by the Andrea Ferrara with his sheep's-head handle. But, as I said before, I will take no advantage. I will await in town to-morrow, near Covent Garden; if any one will pay the redemption-money to my scrivener, with whom the deeds lie, the better for Lord Glenvarloch; if not, I will go forward on the next day, and travel with all despatch to the North, to take possession.'

'Take a father's malison with you, unhappy wretch!' said Lord Huntinglen.

'And a King's, who is *pater patriæ*,' said James.

'I trust to bear both lightly,' said Lord Dalgarno, and bowing around him, he withdrew; while all present, oppressed, and, as it were, overawed, by his determined effrontery, found they could draw breath more freely when he at length relieved them of his society. Lord Huntinglen, applying himself to comfort his new daughter-in-law, withdrew with her also; and the King, with his privy council, whom he had not dismissed, again returned to his council-chamber, though the hour was unusually late. Heriot's attendance was still commanded, but for what reason was not explained to him.

CHAPTER XXXIII

> I 'll play the eavesdropper.
>
> *Richard III*, Act V, Scene 3.

James had no sooner resumed his seat at the council-board than he began to hitch in his chair, cough, use his handkerchief, and make other intimations that he meditated a long speech. The council composed themselves to the beseeming degree of attention. Charles, as strict in his notions of decorum as his father was indifferent to it, fixed himself in an attitude of rigid and respectful attention, while the haughty favourite, conscious of his power over both father and son, stretched himself more easily on his seat, and, in assuming an appearance of listening, seemed to pay a debt to ceremonial rather than to duty.

'I doubt not, my lords,' said the monarch, 'that some of you may be thinking the hour of refection is past, and that it is time to ask with the slave in the comedy — *Quid de symbolo?* Nevertheless, to do justice and exercise judgment is our meat and drink; and now we are to pray your wisdom to consider the case of this unhappy youth, Lord Glenvarloch, and see whether, consistently with our honour, anything can be done in his favour.'

'I am surprised at your Majesty's wisdom making the inquiry,' said the duke; 'it is plain this Dalgarno hath proved one of the most insolent villains on earth, and it must therefore be clear that, if Lord Glenvarloch had run him through the body, there would but have been out of the world a knave who had lived in it too long. I think Lord Glenvarloch hath had much wrong; and I regret that, by the persuasions of this false fellow, I have myself had some hand in it.'

'Ye speak like a child, Steenie — I mean my Lord of Buckingham,' answered the King, 'and as one that does not understand the logic of the schools; for an action may be inconsequential or even meritorious *quoad hominem*, that is, as touching him upon *whom* it is acted; and yet most criminal *quoad locum*, or considering the place *wherein* it is done, as a man may lawfully dance Chrighty Beardie or any other dance in a tavern, but not *inter parietes ecclesiæ;* so that, though it may have been a good deed to have sticked Lord Dalgarno, being such as he has shown himself, anywhere else, yet it fell under the plain statute when violence was offered within the verge of the court. For, let me tell you, my lords, the statute against striking would be of small use in our court, if it could be eluded by justifying the person stricken to be a knave. It is much to be lamented that I ken nae court in Christendom where knaves are not to be found; and if men are to break the peace under pretence of beating them, why, it will rain Jeddart staves [1] in our very antechamber.'

'What your Majesty says,' replied Prince Charles, 'is marked with your usual wisdom: the precincts of palaces must be sacred as well as the persons of kings, which are respected even in the most barbarous nations, as being one step only beneath their divinities. But your Majesty's will can control the severity of this and every other law, and it is in your power, on consideration of his case, to grant this rash young man a free pardon.'

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[1] The old-fashioned weapon called the Jeddart staff was a species of battle-axe. Of a very great tempest, it is said, in the south of Scotland, that it rains Jeddart staffs, as in England the common people talk of its raining cats and dogs.

'*Rem acu tetigisti, Carole, mi puerule,*' answered the King; 'and know, my lords, that we have, by a shrewd device and gift of our own, already sounded the very depth of this Lord Glenvarloch's disposition. I trow there be among you some that remember my handling in the curious case of my Lady Lake, and how I trimmed them about the story of hearkening behind the arras.[1] Now this put me to cogitation, and I remembered me of having read that Dionysius, King of Syracuse, whom historians call *τύραννος*, which signifieth not in the Greek tongue, as in ours, a truculent usurper, but a royal king who governs, it may be, something more strictly than we and other lawful monarchs, whom the ancients termed *βασιλεῖς*. Now this Dionysius of Syracuse caused cunning workmen to build for himself a "lugg." D'ye ken what that is, my lord bishop?'

'A cathedral, I presume to guess,' answered the bishop.

'What the deil, man — I crave your lordship's pardon for swearing — but it was no cathedral, only a lurking-place called the king's "lugg," or "ear," where he could sit undescried and hear the converse of his prisoners. Now, sirs, in imitation of this Dionysius, whom I took for my pattern, the rather that he was a great linguist and grammarian, and taught a school with good applause after his abdication — either he or his successor of the same name, it matters not whilk — I have caused them to make a "lugg" up at the state prison of the Tower

[1] See Note 14.

yonder — more like a pulpit than a cathedral, my lord bishop — and communicating with the arras behind the lieutenant's chamber, where we may sit and privily hear the discourse of such prisoners as are pent up there for state offences, and so creep into the very secrets of our enemies.'

The Prince cast a glance towards the duke, expressive of great vexation and disgust. Buckingham shrugged his shoulders, but the motion was so slight as to be almost imperceptible.

'Weel, my lords, ye ken the fray at the hunting this morning — I shall not get out of the trembling exies until I have a sound night's sleep — just after that, they bring ye in a pretty page that had been found in the Park. We were warned against examining him ourselves by the anxious care of those around us; nevertheless, holding our life ever at the service of these kingdoms, we commanded all to avoid the room, the rather that we suspected this boy to be a girl. What think ye, my lords? Few of you would have thought I had a hawk's eye for sic gear; but we thank God that, though we are old, we know so much of such toys as may beseem a man of decent gravity. Weel, my lords, we questioned this maiden in male attire ourselves, and I profess it was a very pretty interrogatory, and well followed. For, though she at first professed that she assumed this disguise in order to countenance the woman who should present us with the Lady Hermione's petition, for whom she professed entire affection; yet when we, suspecting *anguis in herba*, did put her to the very question, she was compelled to own a virtuous attachment for Glenvarlochides, in such a pretty passion of shame and fear, that we had much ado to keep our own eyes from keeping company with hers in weeping. Also, she laid before us the false practices of this Dalgarno towards Glenvarlochides, inveigling him into houses of ill resort, and giving him evil counsel under pretext of sincere friendship, whereby the inexperienced lad was led to do what was prejudicial to himself and offensive to us. But, however prettily she told her tale, we determined not altogether to trust to her narration, but rather to try the experiment whilk we had devised for such occasions. And having ourselves speedily passed from Greenwich to the Tower, we constituted ourselves eavesdropper, as it is called, to observe what should pass between Glenvarlochides and this page, whom we caused to be admitted to his apartment, well judging that if they were of counsel together to deceive us, it could not be but something of it would spunk out. And what think ye we saw, my lords? Naething for you to sniggle and laugh at, Steenie; for I question if you could have played the temperate and Christian-like part of this poor lad Glenvarloch. He might be a father of the church in comparison of you, man. And then, to try his patience yet farther, we loosed on him a courtier and a citizen, that is, Sir Mungo Malagrowther and our servant George Heriot here, wha dang the poor lad about, and didna greatly spare our royal selves. You mind, Geordie, what you said about the wives and concubines? but I forgie ye, man — nae need of kneeling, I forgie ye — the readier that it regards a certain particular whilk, as it added not much to Solomon's credit, the lack of it cannot be said to impinge on ours. Aweel, my lords, for all temptation of sore distress and evil ensample, this poor lad never loosed his tongue on us to say one unbecoming word; which inclines us the rather, acting always by your wise advice, to treat this affair of the Park as a thing done in the heat of blood, and under strong provocation, and therefore to confer our free pardon on Lord Glenvarloch.'

'I am happy your gracious Majesty,' said the Duke of Buckingham, 'has arrived at that conclusion, though I could never have guessed at the road by which you attained it.'

'I trust,' said Prince Charles, 'that it is not a path which your Majesty will think it consistent with your high dignity to tread frequently.'

'Never while I live again, Baby Charles, that I give you my royal word on. They say that hearkeners hear ill tales of themselves: by my saul, my very ears are tingling wi' that auld sorrow Sir Mungo's sarcasms. He called us close-fisted, Steenie; I am sure you can contradict that. But it is mere envy in the auld mutilated sinner, because he himself has neither a noble to hold in his loof nor fingers to close on it if he had.' Here the King lost recollection of Sir Mungo's irreverence in chuckling over his own wit, and only farther alluded to it by saying — 'We must give the old maunderer *bos in linguam* — something to stop his mouth, or he will rail at us from Dan to Beersheba. And now, my lords, let our warrant of mercy to Lord Glenvarloch be presently expedited, and he put to his freedom; and as his estate is likely to go so sleeveless a gate, we will consider what means of favour we can show him. My lords, I wish you an appetite to an early supper; for our labours have approached that term. Baby Charles and Steenie, you will remain till our couchee. My lord bishop, you will be pleased to stay to bless our meat. Geordie Heriot, a word with you apart.'

His Majesty then drew the citizen into a corner, while the councillors, those excepted who had been commanded to remain, made their obeisance and withdrew. 'Geordie,' said the King, 'my good and trusty servant (here he busied his fingers much with the points and ribbons of his dress), ye see that we have granted, from our own natural sense of right and justice, that which yon long-backed fallow — Moniplies, I think they ca' him — proffered to purchase from us with a mighty bribe; whilk we refused, as being a crowned king, who wad neither sell our justice nor our mercy for pecuniar consideration. Now, what think ye should be the upshot of this?'

'My Lord Glenvarloch's freedom, and his restoration to your Majesty's favour,' said Heriot.

'I ken that,' said the King, peevishly. 'Ye are very dull to-day. I mean, what do you think this fallow Moniplies should think about the matter?'

'Surely that your Majesty is a most good and gracious sovereign,' answered Heriot.

'We had need to be gude and gracious baith,' said the King, still more pettishly, 'that have idiots about us that cannot understand what we mint at, unless we speak it out in braid Lowlands. See this chield Moniplies, sir, and tell him what we have done for Lord Glenvarloch, in whom he takes such part, out of our own gracious motion, though we refused to do it on ony proffer of private advantage. Now, you may put it till him, as if of your own mind, whether it will be a gracious or a dutiful part in him to press us for present payment of the two or three hundred miserable pounds for whilk we were obliged to opignorate our jewels? Indeed, mony men may think ye wad do the part of a good citizen if you took it on yourself to refuse him payment, seeing he hath had what he professed to esteem full satisfaction, and considering, moreover, that it is evident he hath no pressing need of the money, whereof we have much necessity.'

George Heriot sighed internally. 'O my master,' thought he — 'my dear master, is it then fated you are never to indulge any kingly or noble sentiment without its being sullied by some afterthought of interested selfishness!'

The King troubled himself not about what he thought, but, taking him by the collar, said, 'Ye ken my meaning now, Jingler; awa' wi' ye. You are a wise man; manage it your ain gate, but forget not our present straits.'

The citizen made his obeisance and withdrew.

'And now, bairns,' said the King, 'what do you look upon each other for; and what have you got to ask of your dear dad and gossip?'

'Only,' said the Prince, 'that it would please your Majesty to command the lurking-place at the prison to be presently built up: the groans of a captive should not be brought in evidence against him.'

'What! build up my lugg, Baby Charles? And yet, better deaf than hear ill tales of one's self. So let them build it up, hard and fast, without delay, the rather that my back is sair with sitting in it for a whole hour. And now let us see what the cooks have been doing for us, bonny bairns.'

CHAPTER XXXIV

To this brave man the knight repairs
For counsel in his law affairs;
And found him mounted in his pew,
With books and money placed for shew,
Like nest-eggs to make clients lay
And for his false opinion pay.

Hudibras.

Our readers may recollect a certain smooth-tongued, lank-haired, buckram-suited, Scottish scrivener, who, in an early part of this history, appeared in the character of a *protégé* of George Heriot. It is to his house we are about to remove; but times have changed with him. The petty booth hath become a chamber of importance; the buckram suit is changed into black velvet; and although the wearer retains his Puritanical humility and politeness to clients of consequence, he can now look others broad in the face, and treat them with a full allowance of superior opulence, and the insolence arising from it. It was but a short period that had achieved these alterations, nor was the party himself as yet entirely accustomed to them, but the change was becoming less embarrassing to him with every day's practice. Among other acquisitions of wealth, you may see one of Davie Ramsay's best timepieces on the table, and his eye is frequently observing its revolutions, while a boy, whom he employs as a scribe, is occasionally sent out to compare its progress with the clock of St. Dunstan.

The scrivener himself seemed considerably agitated. He took from a strong-box a bundle of parchments, and read passages of them with great attention; then began to soliloquise—'There is no outlet which law can suggest — no back door of evasion — none: if the lands of Glenvarloch are not redeemed before it rings noon, Lord Dalgarno has them a cheap pennyworth. Strange, that he should have been at last able to set his patron at defiance, and achieve for himself the fair estate, with the prospect of which he so long flattered the powerful Buckingham. Might not Andrew Skurliewhitter nick him as neatly? He hath been my patron, true — not more than Buckingham was his; and he can be so no more, for he departs presently for Scotland. I am glad of it; I hate him, and I fear him. He knows too many of my secrets; I know too many of his. But, no — no — no — I need never attempt it, there are no means of over-reaching him. Well, Willie, what o'clock?'

'Ele'en hours just chappit, sir.'

'Go to your desk without, child,' said the scrivener. 'What to do next? I shall lose the old earl's fair business, and, what is worse, his son's foul practice. Old Heriot looks too close into business to permit me more than the paltry and ordinary dues. The Whitefriars business was profitable, but it has become unsafe ever since — pah! what brought that in my head just now? I can hardly hold my pen; if men should see me in this way! Willie (calling aloud to the boy), a cup of distilled waters. Soh! now I could face the devil.'

He spoke the last words aloud, and close by the door of the apartment, which was suddenly opened by Richie Moniplies, followed by two gentlemen, and attended by two porters bearing money-bags. 'If ye can face the devil, Maister Skurliewhitter,' said Richie, 'ye will be the less likely to turn your back on a sack or twa o' siller, which I have ta'en the freedom to bring you. Sathanas and Mammon are near akin.' The porters, at the same time, ranged their load on the floor.

'I — I,' stammered the surprised scrivener — 'I cannot guess what you mean, sir.'

'Only that I have brought you the redemption-money on the part of Lord Glenvarloch, in discharge of a certain mortgage over his family inheritance. And here, in good time, comes Master Reginald Lowestoffe and another honourable gentleman of the Temple, to be witnesses to the transaction.'

'I — I incline to think,' said the scrivener, 'that the term is expired.'

'You will pardon us, Master Scrivener,' said Lowestoffe. 'You will not baffle us; it wants three-quarters of noon by every clock in the city.'

'I must have time, gentlemen,' said Andrew, 'to examine the gold by tale and weight.'

'Do so at your leisure, Master Scrivener,' replied Lowestoffe again. 'We have already seen the contents of each sack told and weighed, and we have put our seals on them. There they stand in a row, twenty in number, each containing three hundred yellow-hammers; we are witnesses to the lawful tender.'

'Gentlemen,' said the scrivener, 'this security now belongs to a mighty lord. I pray you, abate your haste, and let me send for Lord Dalgarno — or rather I will run for him myself.'

So saying, he took up his hat; but Lowestoffe called out — 'Friend Moniplies, keep the door fast, an thou be'st a man! he seeks but to put off the time. In plain terms, Andrew, you may send for the devil, if you will, who is the mightiest lord of my acquaintance, but from hence you stir not till you have answered our proposition, by rejecting or accepting the redemption-money fairly tendered; there it lies — take it or leave it as you will. I have skill enough to know that the law is mightier than any lord in Britain: I have learned so much at the Temple, if I have learned nothing else. And see that you trifle not with it, lest it make your long ears an inch shorter, Master Skurliewhitter.'

'Nay, gentlemen, if you threaten me,' said the scrivener, 'I cannot resist compulsion.'

'No threats — no threats at all, my little Andrew,' said Lowestoffe: 'a little friendly advice only; forget not, honest Andrew, I have seen you in Alsatia.'

Without answering a single word, the scrivener sat down and drew in proper form a full receipt for the money proffered.

'I take it on your report, Master Lowestoffe,' he said; 'I hope you will remember I have insisted neither upon weight nor tale — I have been civil; if there is deficiency I shall come to loss.'

'Fillip his nose with a gold-piece, Richie,' quoth the Templar. 'Take up the papers, and now wend we merrily to dine thou wot'st where.'

'If I might choose,' said Richie, 'it should not be at yonder roguish ordinary; but as it is your pleasure, gentlemen, the treat shall be given wheresoever you will have it.'

'At the ordinary,' said the one Templar.

'At Beaujeu's,' said the other; 'it is the only house in

London for neat wines, nimble drawers, choice dishes, and —'

'And high charges,' quoth Richie Moniplies. 'But, as I said before, gentlemen, ye have a right to command me in this thing, having so frankly rendered me your service in this small matter of business, without other stipulation than that of a slight banquet.'

The latter part of this discourse passed in the street, where, immediately afterwards, they met Lord Dalgarno. He appeared in haste, touched his hat slightly to Master Lowestoffe, who returned his reverence with the same negligence and walked slowly on with his companion, while Lord Dalgarno stopped Richie Moniplies with a commanding sign, which the instinct of education compelled Moniplies, though indignant, to obey.

'Whom do you now follow, sirrah?' demanded the noble.

'Whomsoever goeth before me, my lord,' answered Moniplies.

'No sauciness, you knave; I desire to know if you still serve Nigel Olifaunt?' said Dalgarno.

'I am friend to the noble Lord Glenvarloch,' answered Moniplies, with dignity.

'True,' replied Lord Dalgarno, 'that noble lord has sunk to seek friends among lackeys. Nevertheless — hark thee hither — nevertheless, if he be of the same mind as when we last met, thou mayst show him that, on to-morrow, at four afternoon, I shall pass northward by Enfield Chase. I will be slenderly attended, as I design to send my train through Barnet. It is my purpose to ride an easy pace through the forest, and to linger a while by Camlet Moat; he knows the place, and, if he be aught but an Alsatian bully, will think it fitter for some purposes than the Park. He is, I understand, at liberty, or shortly to be so. If he fail me at the place nominated, he must seek me in Scotland, where he will find me possessed of his father's estate and lands.'

'Humph!' muttered Richie, 'there go twa words to that bargain.' He even meditated a joke on the means which he was conscious he possessed of baffling Lord Dalgarno's expectations; but there was something of keen and dangerous excitement in the eyes of the young nobleman which prompted his discretion for once to rule his wit, and he only answered — 'God grant your lordship may well brook your new conquest — when you get it. I shall do your errand to my lord; whilk is to say,' he added internally, 'he shall never hear a word of it from Richie. I am not the lad to put him in such hazard.'

Lord Dalgarno looked at him sharply for a moment, as if to penetrate the meaning of the dry, ironical tone which, in spite of Richie's awe, mingled with his answer, and then waved his hand, in signal he should pass on. He himself walked slowly till the trio were out of sight, then turned back with hasty steps to the door of the scrivener, which he had passed in his progress, knocked, and was admitted.

Lord Dalgarno found the man of law with the money-bags still standing before him; and it escaped not his penetrating glance that Skurliewhitter was disconcerted and alarmed at his approach.

'How now, man,' he said; 'what! hast thou not a word of oily compliment to me on my happy marriage? not a word of most philosophical consolation on my disgrace at court? Or has my mien, as a wittol and discarded favourite, the properties of the Gorgon's head, the *turbatæ Palladis arma*, as Majesty might say?'

'My lord, I am glad — my lord, I am sorry,' answered the trembling scrivener, who, aware of the vivacity of Lord Dalgarno's temper, dreaded the consequence of the communication he had to make to him.

'Glad and sorry!' answered Lord Dalgarno. 'That is blowing hot and cold, with a witness. Hark ye, you picture of petty-larceny personified, if you are sorry I am a cuckold, remember I am only mine own, you knave: there is too little blood in her cheeks to have sent her astray elsewhere. Well, I will bear mine antler'd honours as I may — gold shall gild them; and for my disgrace, revenge shall sweeten it. Ay, revenge! and there strikes the happy hour.'

The hour of noon was accordingly heard to peal from St. Dunstan's. 'Well banged, brave hammers!' said Lord Dalgarno, in triumph. 'The estate and lands of Glenvarloch are crushed beneath these clanging blows. If my steel to-morrow prove but as true as your iron maces to-day, the poor landless lord will little miss what your peal hath cut him out from. The papers — the papers, thou varlet! I am to-morrow northward ho! At four, afternoon, I am bound to be at Camlet Moat, in the Enfield Chase. To-night most of my retinue set forward. The papers! Come, despatch.'

'My lord, the — the papers of the Glenvarloch mortgage — I — I have them not.'

'Have them not!' echoed Lord Dalgarno. 'Hast thou sent them to my lodging, thou varlet? Did I not say I was coming hither? What mean you by pointing to that money? What villainy have you done for it? It is too large to become honestly by.'

'Your lordship knows best,' answered the scrivener, in great perturbation. 'The gold is your own. It is — it is —'

'Not the redemption-money of the Glenvarloch estate?' said Dalgarno. 'Dare not say it is, or I will, upon the spot, divorce your pettifogging soul from your carrion carcass!' So saying, he seized the scrivener by the collar and shook him so vehemently that he tore it from the cassock.

'My lord, I must call for help,' said the trembling caitiff, who felt at that moment all the bitterness of the mortal agony. 'It was the law's act, not mine. What could I do?'

'Dost ask? Why, thou snivelling dribblet of damnation, were all thy oaths, tricks, and lies spent? or do you hold yourself too good to utter them in my service? Thou shouldst have lied, cozened, outsworn truth itself, rather than stood betwixt me and my revenge! But mark me,' he continued; 'I know more of your pranks than would hang thee. A line from me to the Attorney-General, and thou art sped.'

'What would you have me to do, my lord?' said the scrivener. 'All that art and law can accomplish, I will try.'

'Ah, are you converted? Do so, or pity of your life!' said the lord; 'and remember I never fail my word. Then keep that accursed gold,' he continued. 'Or, stay, I will not trust you; send me this gold home presently to my lodging. I will still forward to Scotland, and it shall go hard but that I hold out Glenvarloch Castle against the owner, by means of the ammunition he has himself furnished. Thou art ready to serve me?' The scrivener professed the most implicit obedience.

'Then remember, the hour was past ere payment was tendered; and see thou hast witnesses of trusty memory to prove that point.'

'Tush, my lord, I will do more,' said Andrew, reviving: 'I will prove that Lord Glenvarloch's friends threatened, swaggered, and drew swords on me. Did your lordship think I was ungrateful enough to have suffered them to prejudice your lordship, save that they had bare swords at my throat?'

'Enough said,' replied Dalgarno; 'you are perfect. Mind that you continue so, as you would avoid my fury. I leave my page below; get porters, and let them follow me instantly with the gold.'

So saying, Lord Dalgarno left the scrivener's habitation.

Skurliewhitter, having despatched his boy to get porters of trust for transporting the money, remained alone and in dismay, meditating by what means he could shake himself free of the vindictive and ferocious nobleman, who possessed at once a dangerous knowledge of his character and the power of exposing him where exposure would be ruin. He had indeed acquiesced in the plan, rapidly sketched, for obtaining possession of the ransomed estate, but his experience foresaw that this would be impossible; while, on the other hand, he could not anticipate the various consequences of Lord Dalgarno's resentment without fears from which his sordid soul recoiled. To be in the power, and subject both to the humours and the extortions, of a spendthrift young lord, just when his industry had shaped out the means of fortune — it was the most cruel trick which fate could have played the incipient usurer.

While the scrivener was in this fit of anxious anticipation, one knocked at the door of the apartment, and, being desired to enter, appeared in the coarse riding-cloak of uncut Wiltshire cloth, fastened by a broad leather belt and brass buckle, which was then generally worn by graziers and countrymen. Skurliewhitter, believing he saw in his visitor a country client who might prove profitable, had opened his mouth to request him to be seated, when the stranger, throwing back his frieze hood which he had drawn over his face, showed the scrivener features well imprinted in his recollection, but which he never saw without a disposition to swoon.

'Is it you?' he said, faintly, as the stranger replaced the hood which concealed his features.

'Who else should it be?' said his visitor.

> 'Thou son of parchment, got betwixt the ink-horn
> And the stuff'd process-bag, that mayest call
> The pen thy father, and the ink thy mother,
> The wax thy brother, and the sand thy sister,
> And the good pillory thy cousin allied —
> Rise, and do reverence unto me, thy better!'

'Not yet down to the country,' said the scrivener, 'after every warning? Do not think your grazier's cloak will bear you out, captain — no, nor your scraps of stage-plays.'

'Why, what would you have me to do?' said the captain. 'Would you have me starve? If I am to fly, you must eke my wings with a few feathers. You can spare them, I think.'

'You had means already: you have had ten pieces. What is become of them?'

'Gone,' answered Captain Colepepper — 'gone, no matter where; I had a mind to bite, and I was bitten, that's all. I think my hand shook at the thought of t' other night's work, for I trowled the doctors like a very baby.'

'And you have lost all, then? Well, take this and be gone,' said the scrivener.

'What, two poor smelts! Marry, plague of your bounty! But remember you are as deep in as I.'

'Not so, by Heaven!' answered the scrivener: 'I only thought of easing the old man of some papers and a trifle of his gold, and you took his life.'

'Were he living,' answered Colepepper, 'he would rather have lost it than his money. But that is not the question, Master Skurliewhitter. You undid the private bolts of the window when you visited him about some affairs on the day ere he died; so satisfy yourself that, if I am taken, I will not swing alone. Pity Jack Hempsfield is dead, it spoils the old catch —

And three merry men, and three merry men,
  And three merry men are we,
As ever did sing three parts in a string,
  All under the triple tree.'

'For God's sake, speak lower,' said the scrivener; 'is this a place or time to make your midnight catches heard? But how much will serve your turn? I tell you, I am but ill provided.'

'You tell me a lie then,' said the bully — 'a most palpable and gross lie. How much, d' ye say, will serve my turn? Why, one of these bags will do for the present.'

'I swear to you that these bags of money are not at my disposal.'

'Not honestly perhaps,' said the captain, 'but that makes little difference betwixt us.'

'I swear to you,' continued the scrivener, 'they are in no way at my disposal: they have been delivered to me by tale; I am to pay them over to Lord Dalgarno, whose boy waits for them, and I could not skelder one piece out of them without risk of hue and cry.'

'Can you not put off the delivery?' said the bravo, his huge hand still fumbling with one of the bags, as if his fingers longed to close on it.

'Impossible,' said the scrivener, 'he sets forward to Scotland to-morrow.'

'Ay!' said the bully, after a moment's thought. 'Travels he the North road with such a charge?'

'He is well accompanied,' added the scrivener; 'but yet —'

'But yet — but what?' said the bravo.

'Nay, I meant nothing,' said the scrivener.

'Thou didst — thou hadst the wind of some good thing,' replied Colepepper; 'I saw thee pause like a setting dog. Thou wilt say as little, and make as sure a sign, as a well-bred spaniel.'

'All I meant to say, captain, was that his servants go by Barnet, and he himself, with his page, pass through Enfield Chase; and he spoke to me yesterday of riding a soft pace.'

'Aha! comest thou to me there, my boy?'

'And of resting,' continued the scrivener —'resting a space at Camlet Moat.'

'Why, this is better than cock-fighting!' said the captain.

'I see not how it can advantage you, captain,' said the scrivener. 'But, however, they cannot ride fast, for his page rides the sumpter-horse, which carries all that weight,' pointing to the money on the table. 'Lord Dalgarno looks sharp to the world's gear.'

'That horse will be obliged to those who may ease him of his burden,' said the bravo; 'and, egad, he may be met with. He hath still that page — that same Lutin — that goblin? Well, the boy hath set game for me ere now. I will be revenged, too, for I owe him a grudge for an old score at the ordinary. Let me see — Black Feltham and Dick Shakebag — we shall want a fourth. I love to make sure, and the booty will stand parting, besides what I can bucket them out of. Well, scrivener, lend me two pieces. Bravely done — nobly imparted! Give ye good-den.' And wrapping his disguise closer around him, away he went.

When he had left the room, the scrivener wrung his hands and exclaimed, 'More blood — more blood! I thought to have had done with it; but this time there was no fault with me — none — and then I shall have all the advantage. If this ruffian falls, there is truce with his tugs at my purse-strings; and if Lord Dalgarno dies — as is most likely, for, though as much afraid of cold steel as a debtor of a dun, this fellow is a deadly shot from behind a bush — then I am in a thousand ways safe — safe — safe.'

We willingly drop the curtain over him and his reflections.

CHAPTER XXXV

We are not worst at once; the course of evil
Begins so slowly, and from such slight source,
An infant's hand might stem its breach with clay.
But let the stream get deeper, and philosophy —
Ah, and religion too — shall strive in vain
To turn the headlong torrent.

Old Play.

The Templars had been regaled by our friend Richie Moniplies in a private chamber at Beaujeu's, where he might be considered as good company; for he had exchanged his serving-man's cloak and jerkin for a grave yet handsome suit of clothes, in the fashion of the times, but such as might have befitted an older man than himself. He had positively declined presenting himself at the ordinary — a point to which his companions were very desirous to have brought him, for it will be easily believed that such wags as Lowestoffe and his companion were not indisposed to a little merriment at the expense of the raw and pedantic Scotsman, besides the chance of easing him of a few pieces, of which he appeared to have acquired considerable command. But not even a succession of measures of sparkling sack, in which the little brilliant atoms circulated like motes in the sun's rays, had the least effect on Richie's sense of decorum. He retained the gravity of a judge, even while he drank like a fish, partly from his own natural inclination to good liquor, partly in the way of good fellowship towards his guests. When the wine began to make some innovation on their heads, Master Lowestoffe, tired, perhaps, of the humours of Richie, who began to become yet more stoically contradictory and dogmatical than ever in the earlier part of the entertainment, proposed to his friend to break up their debauch and join the gamesters.

The drawer was called accordingly, and Richie discharged the reckoning of the party, with a generous remuneration to the attendants, which was received with cap and knee, and many assurances of — 'Kindly welcome, gentlemen.'

'I grieve we should part so soon, gentlemen,' said Richie to his companions; 'and I would you had cracked another quart ere you went, or stayed to take some slight matter of supper and a glass of Rhenish. I thank you, however, for having graced my poor collation thus far; and I commend you to fortune, in your own courses, for the ordinary neither was, is, nor shall be an element of mine.'

'Fare thee well, then,' said Lowestoffe, 'most sapient and sententious Master Moniplies. May you soon have another mortgage to redeem, and may I be there to witness it; and may you play the good fellow as heartily as you have done this day.'

'Nay, gentlemen, it is merely of your grace to say so; but, if you would but hear me speak a few words of admonition respecting this wicked ordinary —'

'Reserve the lesson, most honourable Richie,' said Lowestoffe, 'until I have lost all my money,' showing, at the same time, a purse indifferently well provided, 'and then the lecture is likely to have some weight.'

'And keep my share of it, Richie,' said the other Templar, showing an almost empty purse in his turn, 'till this be full again, and then I will promise to hear you with some patience.'

'Ay — ay, gallants,' said Richie, 'the full and the empty gang a' ae gate, and that is a grey one; but the time will come.'

'Nay, it is come already,' said Lowestoffe: 'they have set out the hazard table. Since you will peremptorily not go with us, why, farewell, Richie.'

'And farewell, gentlemen,' said Richie, and left the house, into which they had returned.

Moniplies was not many steps from the door, when a person whom, lost in his reflections on gaming, ordinaries, and the manners of the age, he had not observed, and who had been as negligent on his part, ran full against him; and, when Richie desired to know whether he meant 'ony incivility,' replied by a curse on Scotland and all that belonged to it. A less round reflection on his country would, at any time, have provoked Richie, but more especially when he had a double quart of Canary and better in his pate. He was about to give a very rough answer, and to second his word by action, when a closer view of his antagonist changed his purpose.

'You are the vera lad in the world,' said Richie, 'whom I most wish to meet.'

'And you,' answered the stranger, 'or any of your beggarly countrymen, are the last sight I should ever wish to see. You Scots are ever fair and false, and an honest man cannot thrive within eye-shot of you.'

'As to our poverty, friend,' replied Richie, 'that is as Heaven pleases; but touching our falset, I'll prove to you that a Scotsman bears as leal and true a heart to his friend as ever beat in English doublet.'

'I care not whether he does or not,' said the gallant. 'Let me go; why keep you hold of my cloak? Let me go, or I will thrust you into the kennel.'

'I believe I could forgie ye, for you did me a good turn once, in plucking me out of it,' said the Scot.

'Beshrew my fingers, then, if they did so,' replied the stranger. 'I would your whole country lay there, along with you; and Heaven's curse blight the hand that helped to raise them! Why do you stop my way?' he added, fiercely.

'Because it is a bad one, Master Jenkin,' said Richie. 'Nay, never start about it, man; you see you are known. Alack-a-day! that an honest man's son should live to start at hearing himself called by his own name!'

Jenkin struck his brow violently with his clenched fist.

'Come — come,' said Richie, 'this passion availeth nothing. Tell me what gate go you?'

'To the devil!' answered Jin Vin.

'That is a black gate, if you speak according to the letter,' answered Richie; 'but if metaphorically, there are worse places in this great city than the Devil Tavern; and I care not if I go thither with you, and bestow a pottle of burnt sack on you; it will correct the crudities of my stomach, and form a gentle preparative for the leg of a cold pullet.'

'I pray you, in good fashion, to let me go,' said Jenkin. 'You may mean me kindly, and I wish you to have no wrong at my hand; but I am in the humour to be dangerous to myself or any one.'

'I will abide the risk,' said the Scot, 'if you will but come with me; and here is a place convenient, a howff nearer than the Devil, whilk is but an ill-omened, drouthy name for a tavern. This other of the St. Andrew is a quiet place, where I have ta'en my whetter now and then when I lodged in the neighbourhood of the Temple with Lord Glenvarloch. What the deil 's the matter wi' the man, garr'd him gie sic a spang as that, and almaist brought himself and me on the causeway?'

'Do not name that false Scot's name to me,' said Jin Vin, 'if you would not have me go mad! I was happy before I saw him; he has been the cause of all the ill that has befallen me: he has made a knave and a madman of me!'

'If you are a knave,' said Richie, 'you have met an officer; if you are daft, you have met a keeper; but a gentle officer and a kind keeper. Look you, my gude friend, there has been twenty things said about this same lord in which there is no more truth than in the leasings of Mahound. The warst they can say of him is, that he is not always so amenable to good advice as I would pray him, you, and every young man to be. Come wi' me — just come ye wi' me; and, if a little spell of siller and a great deal of excellent counsel can relieve your occasions, all I can say is, you have had the luck to meet one capable of giving you both, and maist willing to bestow them.'

The pertinacity of the Scot prevailed over the sullenness of Vincent, who was indeed in a state of agitation and incapacity to think for himself, which led him to yield the more readily to the suggestions of another. He suffered himself to be dragged into the small tavern which Richie recommended, and where they soon found themselves seated in a snug niche, with a reeking pottle of burnt sack and a paper of sugar betwixt them. Pipes and tobacco were also provided, but were only used by Richie, who had adopted the custom of late, as adding considerably to the gravity and importance of his manner, and affording, as it were, a bland and pleasant accompaniment to the words of wisdom which flowed from his tongue. After they had filled their glasses and drunk them in silence, Richie repeated the question, whither his guest was going when they met so fortunately.

'I told you,' said Jenkin, 'I was going to destruction — I mean to the gaming-house. I am resolved to hazard these two or three pieces, to get as much as will pay for a passage with Captain Sharker, whose ship lies at Gravesend, bound for America; and so eastward ho! I met one devil in the way already, who would have tempted me from my purpose, but I spurned him from me; you may be another for what I know. What degree of damnation do you propose for me,' he added wildly, 'and what is the price of it?'

'I would have you to know,' answered Richie, 'that I deal in no such commodities, whether as buyer or seller. But if you will tell me honestly the cause of your distress, I will do what is in my power to help you out of it — not being, however, prodigal of promises until I know the case, as a learned physician only gives advice when he has observed the diagnostics.'

'No one has anything to do with my affairs,' said the poor lad; and folding his arms on the table, he laid his head upon them, with the sullen dejection of the overburdened lama, when it throws itself down in desperation.

Richie Moniplies, like most folk who have a good opinion of themselves, was fond of the task of consolation, which at once displayed his superiority (for the consoler is necessarily, for the time at least, superior to the afflicted person) and indulged his love of talking. He inflicted on the poor penitent a harangue of pitiless length, stuffed full of the usual topics of the mutability of human affairs, the eminent advantages of patience under affliction, the folly of grieving for what hath no remedy, the necessity of taking more care for the future, and some gentle rebukes on account of the past, which acid he threw in to assist in subduing the patient's obstinacy, as Hannibal used vinegar in cutting his way through rocks. It was not in human nature to endure this flood of commonplace eloquence in silence; and Jin Vin, whether desirous of stopping the flow of words crammed thus into his ear, 'against the stomach of his sense,' or whether confiding in Richie's protestations of friendship, which the wretched, says Fielding, are ever so ready to believe, or whether merely to give his sorrow vent in words, raised his head, and turning his red and swollen eyes to Richie —

'Cocksbones, man, only hold thy tongue and thou shalt know all about it; and then all I ask of thee is to shake hands and part. This Margaret Ramsay — you have seen her, man?'

'Once,' said Richie — 'once, at Master George Heriot's, in Lombard Street. I was in the room when they dined.'

'Ay, you helped to shift their trenchers, I remember,' said Jin Vin. 'Well, that same pretty girl — and I will uphold her the prettiest betwixt Paul's and the Bar — she is to be wedded to your Lord Glenvarloch, with a pestilence on him!'

'That is impossible,' said Richie — 'it is raving nonsense, man; they make April gouks of you cockneys every month in the year. The Lord Glenvarloch marry the daughter of a Lonnun mechanic! I would as soon believe the great Prester John would marry the daughter of a Jew packman.'

'Hark ye, brother,' said Jin Vin, 'I will allow no one to speak disregardfully of the city, for all I am in trouble.'

'I crave your pardon, man — I meant no offence,' said Richie; 'but as to the marriage, it is a thing simply impossible.'

'It is a thing that will take place, though, for the Duke and the Prince, and all of them, have a finger in it; and especially the old fool of a King, that makes her out to be some great woman in her own country, as all the Scots pretend to be, you know.'

'Master Vincent, but that you are under affliction,' said the consoler, offended on his part, 'I would hear no national reflections.'

The afflicted youth apologised in his trun, but asserted, 'It was true that the King said Peg-a-Ramsay was some far-off sort of noblewoman; and that he had taken a great interest in the match, and had run about like an old gander, cackling about Peggie ever since he had seen her in hose and doublet — and no wonder,' added poor Vin, with a deep sigh.

'This may be all true,' said Richie, 'though it sounds strange in my ears; but, man, you should not speak evil of dignities. Curse not the King, Jenkin, not even in thy bedchamber: stone walls have ears, no one has a right to know that better than I.'

'I do not curse the foolish old man,' said Jenkin; 'but I would have them carry things a peg lower. If they were to see on a plain field thirty thousand such pikes as I have seen in the artillery gardens, it would not be their long-haired courtiers would help them, I trow.'[1]

'Hout tout, man,' said Richie, 'mind where the Stuarts come frae, and never think they would want spears or claymores either; but leaving sic matters, whilk are perilous to speak on, I say once more, what is your concern in all this matter?'

'What is it?' said Jenkin; 'why, have I not fixed on Peg-a-Ramsay to be my true love, from the day I came to her old father's shop? And have I not carried her pattens and her chopines for three years, and borne her prayer-book to church, and brushed the cushion for her to kneel down upon; and did she ever say me nay?'

'I see no cause she had,' said Richie, 'if the like of such small services were all that ye proffered. Ah, man! there are few — very few, either of fools or of wise men, ken how to guide a woman.'

'Why, did I not serve her at the risk of my freedom, and very nigh at the risk of my neck? Did she not — no, it was not her neither, but that accursed beldam whom she caused to work upon me — persuade me like a fool to turn myself into a waterman to help my lord, and a plague to him! down to Scotland? And instead of going peaceably down to the ship at Gravesend, did not he rant and bully, and show his pistols, and make me land him at Greenwich, where he played some swaggering pranks, that helped both him and me into the Tower?'

'Aha!' said Richie, throwing more than his usual wisdom into his looks, 'so you were the green-jacketed waterman that rowed Lord Glenvarloch down the river?'

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[1] See Note 15.

'The more fool I, that did not souse him in the Thames,' said Jenkin; 'and I was the lad that would not confess one word of who or what I was, though they threatened to make me hug the Duke of Exeter's daughter.'

'Wha is she, man?' said Richie; 'she must be an ill-fashioned piece, if you 're so much afraid of her, and she come of such high kin.'

'I mean the rack — the rack, man,' said Jenkin. 'Where were you bred that never heard of the Duke of Exeter's daughter? But all the dukes and duchesses in England could have got nothing out of me; so the truth came out some other way, and I was set free. Home I ran, thinking myself one of the cleverest and happiest fellows in the ward. And she — she — she wanted to pay me with *money* for all my true service! and she spoke so sweetly and so coldly at the same time, I wished myself in the deepest dungeon of the Tower. I wish they had racked me to death before I heard this Scottishman was to chouse me out of my sweetheart!'

'But are ye sure ye have lost her?' said Richie. 'It sounds strange in my ears that my Lord Glenvarloch should marry the daughter of a dealer; though there are uncouth marriages made in London, I'll allow that.'

'Why, I tell you this lord was no sooner clear of the Tower than he and Master George Heriot comes to make proposals for her, with the King's assent, and what not; and fine fair-day prospect of court favour for this lord, for he hath not an acre of land.'

'Well, and what said the auld watch-maker?' said Richie; 'was he not, as might weel beseem him, ready to loup out of his skin-case for very joy?'

'He multiplied six figures progressively, and reported the product; then gave his consent.'

'And what did you do?'

'I rushed into the streets,' said the poor lad, 'with a burning heart and a bloodshot eye; and where did I first find myself, but with that beldam, Mother Suddlechop; and what did she propose to me, but to take the road?'

'Take the road, man! in what sense?' said Richie.

'Even as a clerk to St. Nicholas — as a highwayman, like Poins and Peto, and the good fellows in the play. And who think you was to be my captain? — for she had the whole out ere I could speak to her; I fancy she took silence for consent, and thought me damned too unutterably to have one thought left that savoured of redemption — who was to be my captain, but the knave that you saw me cudgel at the ordinary when you waited on Lord Glenvarloch — a cowardly, sharking, thievish bully about town here, whom they call Colepepper.'

'Colepepper — umph — I know somewhat of that smaik,' said Richie; 'ken ye by ony chance where he may be heard of, Master Jenkin? ye wad do me a sincere service to tell me.'

'Why, he lives something obscurely,' answered the apprentice, 'on account of suspicion of some villainy — I believe that horrid murder in Whitefriars, or some such matter. But I might have heard all about him from Dame Suddlechop, for she spoke of my meeting him at

Enfield Chase, with some other good fellows, to do a robbery on one that goes northward with a store of treasure.'

'And you did not agree to this fine project?' said Moniplies.

'I cursed her for a hag, and came away about my business,' answered Jenkin.

'Ay, and what said she to that, man? That would startle her,' said Richie.

'Not a whit. She laughed, and said she was in jest,' answered Jenkin; 'but I know the she-devil's jest from her earnest too well to be taken in that way. But she knows I would never betray her.'

'Betray her! No,' replied Richie; 'but are ye in any shape bound to this birkie Peppercull, or Colepepper, or whatever they call him, that ye suld let him do a robbery on the honest gentleman that is travelling to the North, and maybe a kindly Scot for what we know?'

'Ay — going home with a load of English money,' said Jenkin. 'But be he who he will, they may rob the whole world an they list, for I am robbed and ruined.'

Richie filled up his friend's cup to the brim, and insisted that he should drink what he called 'clean caup out.' 'This love,' he said, 'is but a bairnly matter for a brisk young fellow like yourself, Master Jenkin. And if ye must needs have a whimsy, though I think it would be safer to venture on a staid womanly body, why, here be as bonny lasses in London as this Peg-a-Ramsay. Ye need not sigh sae deeply, for it is very true: there is as good fish in the sea as ever came out of it. Now wherefore should you, who are as brisk and trig a young fellow of your inches as the sun needs to shine on —

wherefore need you sit moping this way, and not try some bold way to better your fortune?'

'I tell you, Master Moniplies,' said Jenkin, 'I am as poor as any Scot among you; I have broke my indenture, and I think of running my country.'

'A-well-a-day!' said Richie, 'but that maunna be, man. I ken weel, by sad experience, that poortith takes away pith, and the man sits full still that has a rent in his breeks.[1] But courage, man; you have served me heretofore, and I will serve you now. If you will but bring me to speech of this same captain, it shall be the best day's work you ever did.'

'I guess where you are, Master Richard: you would save your countryman's long purse,' said Jenkin. 'I cannot see how that should advantage me, but I reck not if I should bear a hand. I hate that braggart, that bloody-minded, cowardly bully. If you can get me mounted, I care not if I show you where the dame told me I should meet him; but you must stand to the risk, for though he is a coward himself, I know he will have more than one stout fellow with him.'

'We'll have a warrant, man,' said Richie, 'and the hue and cry to boot.'

'We will have no such thing,' said Jenkin, 'if I am to go with you. I am not the lad to betray any one to the harman-beck. You must do it by manhood if I am to go with you. I am sworn to cutter's law, and will sell no man's blood.'

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[1] This elegant speech was made by the Earl of Douglas, called Tineman, after being wounded and made prisoner at the battle of Shrewsbury, where

His well labouring sword
Had three times slain the semblance of the king.

'Aweel,' said Richie, 'a wilful man must have his way; ye must think that I was born and bred where cracked crowns were plentier than whole ones. Besides, I have two noble friends here, Master Lowestoffe of the Temple and his cousin Master Ringwood, that will blythely be of so gallant a party.'

'Lowestoffe and Ringwood!' said Jenkin; 'they are both brave gallants, they will be sure company. Know you where they are to be found?'

'Ay, marry do I,' replied Richie. 'They are fast at the cards and dice, till the sma' hours, I warrant them.'

'They are gentlemen of trust and honour,' said Jenkin, 'and, if they advise it, I will try the adventure. Go, try if you can bring them hither, since you have so much to say with them. We must not be seen abroad together. I know not how it is, Master Moniplies,' continued he, as his countenance brightened up, and while, in his turn, he filled the cups, 'but I feel my heart something lighter since I have thought of this matter.'

'Thus it is to have counsellors, Master Jenkin,' said Richie; 'and truly I hope to hear you say that your heart is as light as a lavrock's, and that before you are many days aulder. Never smile and shake your head, but mind what I tell you; and bide here in the meanwhile, till I go to seek these gallants. I warrant you, cart-ropes would not hold them back from such a ploy as I shall propose to them.'

CHAPTER XXXVI

The thieves have bound the true men. Now, could thou and I rob the thieves, and go merrily to London. — *Henry IV*, Part I.

THE sun was high upon the glades of Enfield Chase, and the deer, with which it then abounded, were seen sporting in picturesque groups among the ancient oaks of the forest, when a cavalier and a lady, on foot, although in riding-apparel, sauntered slowly up one of the long alleys which were cut through the park for the convenience of the hunters. Their only attendant was a page, who, riding a Spanish jennet, which seemed to bear a heavy cloak-bag, followed them at a respectful distance. The female, attired in all the fantastic finery of the period, with more than the usual quantity of bugles, flounces, and trimmings, and holding her fan of ostrich feathers in one hand, and her riding-mask of black velvet in the other, seemed anxious, by all the little coquetry practised on such occasions, to secure the notice of her companion, who sometimes heard her prattle without seeming to attend to it, and at other times interrupted his train of graver reflections to reply to her.

'Nay, but, my lord — my lord, you walk so fast, you will leave me behind you. Nay, I will have hold of your arm; but how to manage with my mask and my fan? Why would you not let me bring my waiting-gentlewoman to follow us, and hold my things? But see, I will put my fan in my girdle, soh! and now that I have a hand to hold you with, you shall not run away from me.'

'Come on, then,' answered the gallant, 'and let us walk apace, since you would not be persuaded to stay with your gentlewoman, as you call her, and with the rest of the baggage. You may perhaps see *that*, though, you will not like to see.'

She took hold of his arm accordingly; but, as he continued to walk at the same pace, she shortly let go her hold, exclaiming that he had hurt her hand. The cavalier stopped, and looked at the pretty hand and arm which she showed him, with exclamations against his cruelty. 'I dare say,' she said, baring her wrist and a part of her arm, 'it is all black and blue to the very elbow.'

'I dare say you are a silly little fool,' said the cavalier, carelessly kissing the aggrieved arm; 'it is only a pretty incarnate which sets off the blue veins.'

'Nay, my lord, now it is you are silly,' answered the dame; 'but I am glad I can make you speak and laugh on any terms this morning. I am sure, if I did insist on following you into the forest, it was all for the sake of diverting you. I am better company than your page, I trow. And now, tell me, these pretty things with horns, be they not deer?'

'Even such they be, Nelly,' answered her neglectful attendant.

'And what can the great folk do with so many of them, forsooth?'

'They send them to the city, Nell, where wise men make venison pasties of their flesh, and wear their horns for trophies,' answered Lord Dalgarno, whom our reader has already recognised.

'Nay, now you laugh at me, my lord,' answered his companion; 'but I know all about venison, whatever you may think. I always tasted it once a year when we dined with Mr. Deputy,' she continued, sadly, as a sense of her degradation stole across a mind bewildered with vanity and folly, 'though he would not speak to me now, if we met together in the narrowest lane in the ward!'

'I warrant he would not,' said Lord Dalgarno, 'because thou, Nell, wouldst dash him with a single look; for I trust thou hast more spirit than to throw away words on such a fellow as he?'

'Who, I!' said Dame Nelly. 'Nay, I scorn the proud princox too much for that. Do you know, he made all the folk in the ward stand cap in hand to him, my poor old John Christie and all?' Here her recollection began to overflow at her eyes.

'A plague on your whimpering,' said Dalgarno, somewhat harshly. 'Nay, never look pale for the matter, Nell. I am not angry with you, you simple fool. But what would you have me think, when you are eternally looking back upon your dungeon yonder by the river, which smelt of pitch and old cheese worse than a Welshman does of onions, and all this when I am taking you down to a castle as fine as is in Fairyland!'

'Shall we be there to-night, my lord?' said Nelly, drying her tears.

'To-night, Nelly! no, nor this night fortnight.'

'Now, the Lord be with us and keep us! But shall we not go by sea, my lord? I thought everybody came from Scotland by sea. I am sure Lord Glenvarloch and Richie Moniplies came up by sea.'

'There is a wide difference between coming up and going down, Nelly,' answered Lord Dalgarno.

'And so there is, for certain,' said his simple companion. 'But yet I think I heard people speaking of going down to Scotland by sea, as well as coming up. Are you well avised of the way? Do you think it possible we can go by land, my sweet lord?'

'It is but trying, my sweet lady,' said Lord Dalgarno. 'Men say England and Scotland are in the same island, so one would hope there may be some road betwixt them by land.'

'I shall never be able to ride so far,' said the lady.

'We will have your saddle stuffed softer,' said the lord. 'I tell you that you shall mew your city slough, and change from the caterpillar of a paltry lane into the butterfly of a prince's garden. You shall have as many tires as there are hours in the day — as many handmaidens as there are days in the week — as many menials as there are weeks in the year — and you shall ride a-hunting and hawking with a lord, instead of waiting upon an old ship-chandler, who could do nothing but hawk and spit.'

'Ay, but will you make me your lady?' said Dame Nelly.

'Ay, surely — what else?' replied the lord. 'My lady-love.'

'Ay, but I mean your lady-wife,' said Nelly.

'Truly, Nell, in that I cannot promise to oblige you. A lady-wife,' continued Dalgarno, 'is a very different thing from a lady-love.'

'I heard from Mrs. Suddlechop, whom you lodged me with since I left poor old John Christie, that Lord

Glenvarloch is to marry David Ramsay the clockmaker's daughter?'

'There is much betwixt the cup and the lip, Nelly. I wear something about me may break the banns of that hopeful alliance, before the day is much older,' answered Lord Dalgarno.

'Well, but my father was as good a man as old Davie Ramsay, and as well to pass in the world, my lord; and, therefore, why should you not marry me? You have done me harm enough, I trow; wherefore should you not do me this justice?'

'For two good reasons, Nelly. Fate put a husband on you, and the King passed a wife upon me,' answered Lord Dalgarno.

'Ay, my lord,' said Nelly, 'but they remain in England, and we go to Scotland.'

'Thy argument is better than thou art aware of,' said Lord Dalgarno. 'I have heard Scottish lawyers say the matrimonial tie may be unclasped in our happy country by the gentle hand of the ordinary course of law, whereas in England it can only be burst by an act of Parliament. Well, Nelly, we will look into that matter; and whether we get married again or no, we will at least do our best to get unmarried.'

'Shall we indeed, my honey-sweet lord? And then I will think less about John Christie, for he will marry again, I warrant you, for he is well to pass; and I would be glad to think he had somebody to take care of him, as I used to do, poor loving old man! He was a kind man, though he was a score of years older than I; and I hope and pray he will never let a young lord cross his honest threshold again!'

Here the dame was once more much inclined to give way to a passion of tears; but Lord Dalgarno conjured down the emotion by saying, with some asperity — 'I am weary of these April passions, my pretty mistress, and I think you will do well to preserve your tears for some more pressing occasion. Who knows what turn of fortune may in a few minutes call for more of them than you can render?'

'Goodness, my lord! what mean you by such expressions? John Christie, the kind heart! used to keep no secrets from me, and I hope your lordship will not hide your counsel from me?'

'Sit down beside me on this bank,' said the nobleman; 'I am bound to remain here for a short space, and if you can be but silent, I should like to spend a part of it in considering how far I can, on the present occasion, follow the respectable example which you recommend to me.'

The place at which he stopped was at that time little more than a mound, partly surrounded by a ditch, from which it derived the name of Camlet Moat. A few hewn stones there were, which had escaped the fate of many others that had been used in building different lodges in the forest for the royal keepers. These vestiges, just sufficient to show that 'here in former times the hand of man had been,' marked the ruins of the abode of a once illustrious but long-forgotten family, the Mandevilles, Earls of Essex, to whom Enfield Chase and the extensive domains adjacent had belonged in older days. A wild woodland prospect led the eye at various points through broad and seemingly interminable alleys, which, meeting at this point as at a common centre, diverged from each other as they receded, and had, therefore, been selected by Lord Dalgarno as the rendezvous for the combat, which, through the medium of Richie Moniplies, he had offered to his injured friend, Lord Glenvarloch.

'He will surely come?' he said to himself. 'Cowardice was not wont to be his fault; at least he was bold enough in the Park. Perhaps yonder churl may not have carried my message? But no — he is a sturdy knave, one of those would prize their master's honour above their life. Look to the palfrey, Lutin, and see thou let him not loose, and cast thy falcon glance down every avenue to mark if any one comes. Buckingham has undergone my challenge, but the proud minion pleads the King's paltry commands for refusing to answer me. If I can baffle this Glenvarloch, or slay him — if I can spoil him of his honour or his life, I shall go down to Scotland with credit sufficient to gild over past mischances. I know my dear countrymen; they never quarrel with any one who brings them home either gold or martial glory, much more if he has both gold and laurels.'

As he thus reflected, and called to mind the disgrace which he had suffered, as well as the causes he imagined for hating Lord Glenvarloch, his countenance altered under the influence of his contending emotions, to the terror of Nelly, who, sitting unnoticed at his feet, and looking anxiously in his face, beheld the cheek kindle, the mouth become compressed, the eye dilated, and the whole countenance express the desperate and deadly resolutions of one who awaits an instant and decisive encounter with a mortal enemy. The loneliness of the place, the scenery so different from that to which alone she had been accustomed, the dark and sombre air which crept so suddenly over the countenance of her seducer, his command imposing silence upon her, and the apparent strangeness of his conduct in idling away so much time without any obvious cause, when a journey of such length lay before them, brought strange thoughts into her weak brain. She had read of women, seduced from their matrimonial duties by sorcerers allied to the hellish powers, nay, by the Father of Evil himself, who, after conveying his victim into some desert remote from human kind, exchanged the pleasing shape in which he gained her affections for all his natural horrors. She chased this wild idea away as it crowded itself upon her weak and bewildered imagination; yet she might have lived to see it realised allegorically, if not literally, but for the accident which presently followed.

The page, whose eyes were remarkably acute, at length called out to his master, pointing with his finger at the same time down one of the alleys, that horsemen were advancing in that direction. Lord Dalgarno started up, and shading his eyes with his hand, gazed eagerly down the alley; when, at the same instant, he received a shot, which, grazing his hand, passed right through his brain, and laid him a lifeless corpse at the feet, or rather across the lap, of the unfortunate victim of his profligacy. The countenance, whose varied expression she had been watching for the last five minutes, was convulsed for an instant, and then stiffened into rigidity for ever. Three ruffians rushed from the brake from which the shot had been fired, ere the smoke was dispersed. One, with many imprecations, seized on the page; another on the female, upon whose cries he strove by the most violent threats to impose silence; whilst the third began to undo the burden from the page's horse. But an instant rescue prevented their availing themselves of the advantage they had obtained.

It may easily be supposed that Richie Moniplies, having secured the assistance of the two Templars, ready enough to join in anything which promised a fray, with Jin Vin to act as their guide, had set off, gallantly mounted and well armed, under the belief that they would reach Camlet Moat before the robbers, and apprehend them in the fact. They had not calculated that, according to the custom of robbers in other countries, but contrary to that of the English highwaymen of those days, they meant to ensure robbery by previous murder. An accident also happened to delay them a little while on the road. In riding through one of the glades of the forest, they found a man dismounted and sitting under a tree, groaning with such bitterness of spirit that Lowestoffe could not forbear asking if he was hurt. In answer, he said he was an unhappy man in pursuit of his wife, who had been carried off by a villain; and as he raised his countenance, the eyes of Richie, to his great astonishment, encountered the visage of John Christie.

'For the Almighty's sake, help me, Master Moniplies!' he said; 'I have learned my wife is but a short mile before, with that black villain Lord Dalgarno.'

'Have him forward by all means,' said Lowestoffe — 'a second Orpheus seeking his Eurydice! Have him forward; we will save Lord Dalgarno's purse and ease him of his mistress. Have him with us, were it but for the variety of the adventure. I owe his lordship a grudge for rooking me. We have ten minutes good.'

But it is dangerous to calculate closely in matters of life and death. In all probability the minute or two which was lost in mounting John Christie behind one of their party might have saved Lord Dalgarno from his fate. Thus his criminal amour became the indirect cause of losing his life; and thus 'our pleasant vices are made the whips to scourge us.'

The riders arrived on the field at full gallop the moment after the shot was fired; and Richie, who had his own reasons for attaching himself to Colepepper, who was bustling to untie the portmanteau from the page's saddle, pushed against him with such violence as to overthrow him, his own horse at the same time stumbling and dismounting his rider, who was none of the first equestrians. The undaunted Richie immediately arose, however, and grappled with the ruffian with such good will that, though a strong fellow, and though a coward now rendered desperate, Moniplies got him under, wrenched a long knife from his hand, dealt him a desperate stab with his own weapon, and leaped on his feet; and, as the wounded man struggled to follow his example, he struck him upon the head with the butt-end of a musketoon, which last blow proved fatal.

'Bravo, Richie!' cried Lowestoffe, who had himself engaged at sword-point with one of the ruffians, and soon put him to flight. 'Bravo! why, man, there lies sin, struck down like an ox, and iniquity's throat cut like a calf.'

'I know not why you should upbraid me with my upbringing, Master Lowestoffe,' answered Richie with great composure; 'but I can tell you the shambles is not a bad place for training one to this work.'

The other Templar now shouted loudly to them — 'If ye be men, come hither; here lies Lord Dalgarno, murdered!'

Lowestoffe and Richie ran to the spot, and the page took the opportunity, finding himself now neglected on all hands, to ride off in a different direction; and neither he nor the considerable sum with which his horse was burdened were ever heard of from that moment.

The third ruffian had not waited the attack of the Templar and Jin Vin, the latter of whom had put down old Christie from behind him that he might ride the lighter; and the whole five now stood gazing with horror on the bloody corpse of the young nobleman, and the wild sorrow of the female, who tore her hair and shrieked in the most disconsolate manner, until her agony was at once checked, or rather received a new direction, by the sudden and unexpected appearance of her husband, who, fixing on her a cold and severe look, said, in a tone suited to his manner — 'Ay, woman! thou takest on sadly for the loss of thy paramour.' Then looking on the bloody corpse of him from whom he had received so deep an injury, he repeated the solemn words of Scripture, '"Vengeance is mine, saith the Lord, and I will repay it." I, whom thou hast injured, will be first to render thee the decent offices due to the dead.'

So saying, he covered the dead body with his cloak, and then looking on it for a moment, seemed to reflect on what he had next to perform. As the eye of the injured man slowly passed from the body of the seducer to the partner and victim of his crime, who had sunk down at his feet, which she clasped without venturing to look up, his features, naturally coarse and saturnine, assumed a dignity of expression which overawed the young Templars, and repulsed the officious forwardness of Richie Moniplies, who was at first eager to have thrust in his advice and opinion. 'Kneel not to me, woman,' he said, 'but kneel to the God thou hast offended more than thou couldst offend such another worm as thyself. How often have I told thee, when thou wert at the gayest and the lightest, that pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall? Vanity brought folly, and folly brought sin, and sin hath brought death, his original companion. Thou must needs leave duty, and decency, and domestic love, to revel it gaily with the wild and with the wicked; and there thou liest, like a crushed worm, writhing beside the lifeless body of thy paramour. Thou hast done me much wrong — dishonoured me among friends — driven credit from my house, and peace from my fireside. But thou wert my first and only love, and I will not see thee an utter castaway, if it lies with me to prevent it. Gentlemen, I render ye such thanks as a broken-hearted man can give. Richard, commend me to your honourable master. I added gall to the bitterness of his affliction, but I was deluded. Rise up, woman, and follow me.'

He raised her up by the arm, while, with streaming eyes and bitter sobs, she endeavoured to express her penitence. She kept her hands spread over her face, yet suffered him to lead her away; and it was only as they turned around a brake which concealed the scene they had left, that she turned back, and casting one wild and hurried glance towards the corpse of Dalgarno, uttered a shriek, and, clinging to her husband's arm, exclaimed wildly, 'Save me — save me! They have murdered him!'

Lowestoffe was much moved by what he had witnessed; but he was ashamed, as a town gallant, of his own unfashionable emotion, and did a force to his feelings when he exclaimed, 'Ay, let them go — the kind-hearted, believing, forgiving husband — the liberal, accommodating spouse. O what a generous creature is your true London husband! Horns hath he, but, tame as a fatted ox, he goreth not. I should like to see her when she hath exchanged her mask and riding-beaver for her peaked hat and muffler. We will visit them at Paul's Wharf, coz; it will be a convenient acquaintance.'

'You had better think of catching the gipsy thief, Lutin,' said Richie Moniplies, 'for, by my faith, he is off with his master's baggage and the siller.'

A keeper, with his assistants and several other persons, had now come to the spot, and made hue and cry after Lutin, but in vain. To their custody the Templars surrendered the dead bodies, and after going through some formal investigation, they returned, with Richard and Vincent, to London, where they received great applause for their gallantry. Vincent's errors were easily expiated in consideration of his having been the means of breaking up this band of villains; and there is some reason to think that what would have diminished the credit of the action in other instances rather added to it in the actual circumstances, namely, that they came too late to save Lord Dalgarno.

George Heriot, who suspected how matters stood with

Vincent, requested and obtained permission from his master to send the poor young fellow on an important piece of business to Paris. We are unable to trace his fate further, but believe it was prosperous, and that he entered into an advantageous partnership with his fellow apprentice, upon old Davie Ramsay retiring from business, in consequence of his daughter's marriage. That eminent antiquary, Dr. Dryasdust, is possessed of an antique watch, with a silver dial-plate, the mainspring being a piece of catgut instead of a chain, which bears the name of 'Vincent and Tunstall, memory-monitors.'

Master Lowestoffe failed not to vindicate his character as a man of gaiety by inquiring after John Christie and Dame Nelly; but, greatly to his surprise, indeed to his loss, for he had wagered ten pieces that he would domesticate himself in the family, he found the goodwill, as it was called, of the shop was sold, the stock auctioned, and the late proprietor and his wife gone, no one knew whither. The prevailing belief was that they had emigrated to one of the new settlements in America.

Lady Dalgarno received the news of her unworthy husband's death with a variety of emotions, among which horror that he should have been cut off in the middle career of his profligacy was the most prominent. The incident greatly deepened her melancholy, and injured her health, already shaken by previous circumstances. Repossessed of her own fortune by her husband's death, she was anxious to do justice to Lord Glenvarloch by treating for the recovery of the mortgage. But the scrivener, having taken fright at the late events, had left the city and absconded, so that it was impossible to discover into whose hands the papers had now passed. Richard Moniplies was silent for his own reasons; the Templars, who had witnessed the transaction, kept the secret at his request; and it was universally believed that the scrivener had carried off the writings along with him. We may here observe, that fears similar to those of Skurliewhitter freed London for ever from the presence of Dame Suddlechop, who ended her career in the *rasphaus* (viz. bridewell) of Amsterdam.

The stout old Lord Huntinglen, with a haughty carriage and unmoistened eye, accompanied the funeral procession of his only son to its last abode; and perhaps the single tear which fell at length upon the coffin was given less to the fate of the individual than to the extinction of the last male of his ancient race.

CHAPTER XXXVII

Jacques. **There is, sure, another flood toward, and these couples are coming to the ark! Here comes a pair of very strange beasts. — *As You Like It.***

THE fashion of such narratives as the present changes like other earthly things. Time was that the tale-teller was obliged to wind up his story by a circumstantial description of the wedding, bedding, and throwing the stocking, as the grand catastrophe to which, through so many circumstances of doubt and difficulty, he had at length happily conducted his hero and heroine. Not a circumstance was then omitted, from the manly ardour of the bridegroom and the modest blushes of the bride to the parson's new surplice and the silk tabinet mantua of the bridesmaid. But such descriptions are now discarded, for the same reason, I suppose, that public marriages are no longer fashionable, and that, instead of calling together their friends to a feast and a dance, the happy couple elope in a solitary post-chaise, as secretly as if they meant to go to Gretna Green or to do worse. I am not ungrateful for a change which saves an author the trouble of attempting in vain to give a new colour to the commonplace description of such matters; but, notwithstanding, I find myself forced upon it in the present instance, as circumstances sometimes compel a stranger to make use of an old road which has been for some time shut up. The experienced reader may have already remarked that the last chapter was employed in sweeping out of the way all the unnecessary and less interesting characters, that I might clear the floor for a blythe bridal.

In truth, it would be unpardonable to pass over slightly what so deeply interested our principal personage, King James. That learned and good-humoured monarch made no great figure in the politics of Europe; but then, to make amends, he was prodigiously busy when he could find a fair opportunity of intermeddling with the private affairs of his loving subjects, and the approaching marriage of Lord Glenvarloch was matter of great interest to him. He had been much struck, that is, for him, who was not very accessible to such emotions, with the beauty and embarrassment of the pretty Peg-a-Ramsay, as he called her, when he first saw her, and he glorified himself greatly on the acuteness which he had displayed in detecting her disguise, and in carrying through the whole inquiry which took place in consequence of it.

He laboured for several weeks, while the courtship was in progress, with his own royal eyes, so as wellnigh to wear out, he declared, a pair of her father's best barnacles, in searching through old books and documents, for the purpose of establishing the bride's pretensions to a noble, though remote, descent, and thereby remove the only objection which envy might conceive against the match. In his own opinion, at least, he was eminently successful; for, when Sir Mungo Malagrowther one day, in the presence-chamber, took upon him to grieve bitterly for the bride's lack of pedigree, the monarch cut him short with — 'Ye may save your grief for your ain next occasions, Sir Mungo; for, by our royal saul, we will uphauld her father, Davie Ramsay, to be a gentleman of nine descents, whase great gudesire came of the auld martial stock of the house of Dalwolsey, than whom better men never did, and better never will, draw sword for king and country. Heard ye never of Sir William Ramsay of Dalwolsey, man, of whom John Fordoun saith, "He was *bellicosissimus, nobilissimus*"? His castle stands to witness for itsell, not three miles from Dalkeith, man, and within a mile of Bannockrig. Davie Ramsay came of that auld and honoured stock, and I trust he hath not derogated from his ancestors by his present craft. They all wrought wi' steel, man; only the auld knights drilled holes wi' their swords in their enemies' corslets, and he saws nicks in his brass wheels. And I hope it is as honourable to give eyes to the blind as to slash them out of the head of those that see; and to show us how to value our time as it passes, as to fling it away in drinking, brawling, spear-splintering, and such-like unchristian doings. And you maun understand that Davie Ramsay is no mechanic, but follows a liberal art, which approacheth almost to the act of creating a living being, seeing it may be said of a watch, as Claudius saith of the sphere of Archimedes, the Syracusan —

Inclusus variis famulatur spiritus astris,
Et vivum certis motibus urget opus.'

'Your Majesty had best give auld Davie a coat-of-arms as well as a pedigree,' said Sir Mungo.

'It 's done or ye bade, Sir Mungo,' said the King; 'and I trust we, who are the fountain of all earthly honour, are free to spirt a few drops of it on one so near our person, without offence to the knight of Castle Girnigo. We have already spoken with the learned men of the

Herald's College, and we propose to grant him an augmented coat-of arms, being his paternal coat, charged with the crown-wheel of a watch in chief, for a difference; and we purpose to add Time and Eternity, for supporters, as soon as the Garter King-at-Arms shall be able to devise how Eternity is to be represented.'

'I would make him twice as muckle as Time,'[1] said Archie Armstrong, the court fool, who chanced to be present when the King stated this dilemma.

'Peace, man — ye shall be whippet,' said the King, in return for this hint; 'and you, my liege subjects of England, may weel take a hint from what we have said, and not be in such a hurry to laugh at our Scottish pedigrees, though they be somewhat long derived and difficult to be deduced. Ye see that a man of right gentle blood may, for a season, lay by his gentry, and yet ken whare to find it, when he has occasion for it. It would be as unseemly for a packman, or pedlar, as ye call a travelling-merchant, whilk is a trade to which our native subjects of Scotland are specially addicted, to be blazing his genealogy in the faces of those to whom he sells a bawbee's worth of ribbon, as it would be to him to have a beaver on his head and a rapier by his side, when the pack was on his shoulders. Na — na, he hings his sword on the cleek, lays his beaver on the shelf, puts his pedigree into his pocket, and gangs as doucely and cannily about his pedling craft as if his blood was nae better than ditch-water; but let our pedlar be transformed, as I have kenn'd it happen mair than ance, into a bein thriving merchant, then ye shall have a transformation, my lords.

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[1] Chaucer says, there is nothing new but what has been old. The reader has here the original of an anecdote which has since been fathered on a Scottish chief of our own time.

> In nova fert animus mutatas dicere formas.

Out he pulls his pedigree, on he buckles his sword, gives his beaver a brush, and cocks it in the face of all creation. We mention these things at the mair length, because we would have you all to know that it is not without due consideration of the circumstances of all parties that we design, in a small and private way, to honour with our own royal presence the marriage of Lord Glenvarloch with Margaret Ramsay, daughter and heiress of David Ramsay, our horologer, and a cadet only thrice removed from the ancient house of Dalwolsey. We are grieved we cannot have the presence of the noble chief of that house at the ceremony; but where there is honour to be won abroad, the Lord Dalwolsey is seldom to be found at home. *Sic fuit, est, et erit.* Jingling Geordie, as ye stand to the cost of the marriage-feast, we look for good cheer.'

Heriot bowed, as in duty bound. In fact, the King, who was a great politician about trifles, had manœuvred greatly on this occasion, and had contrived to get the Prince and Buckingham despatched on an expedition to Newmarket, in order that he might find an opportunity in their absence of indulging himself in his own gossiping, 'coshering' habits, which were distasteful to Charles, whose temper inclined to formality, and with which even the favourite, of late, had not thought it worth while to seem to sympathise.

When the levee was dismissed, Sir Mungo Malagrowther seized upon the worthy citizen in the courtyard of the palace, and detained him, in spite of all his efforts, for the purpose of subjecting him to the following scrutiny: —

'This is a sair job on you, Master George — the King must have had little consideration — this will cost you a bonny penny, this wedding-dinner?'

'It will not break me, Sir Mungo,' answered Heriot; 'the King hath a right to see the table which his bounty hath supplied for years well covered for a single day.'

'Vera true — vera true; we'll have a' to pay, I doubt, less or mair: a sort of penny-wedding it will prove, where all men contribute to the young folks' maintenance, that they may not have just four bare legs in a bed thegether. What do you purpose to give, Master George? we begin with the city when money is in question.'[1]

'Only a trifle, Sir Mungo: I give my god-daughter the marriage-ring. It is a curious jewel — I bought it in Italy; it belonged to Cosmo de Medici. The bride will not need my help: she has an estate which belonged to her maternal grandfather.'

'The auld soap-boiler,' said Sir Mungo; 'it will need some of his suds to scour the blot out of the Glenvarloch shield. I have heard that estate was no great things.'

'It is as good as some posts at court, Sir Mungo, which are coveted by persons of high quality,' replied George Heriot.

'Court favour, said ye! — court favour, Master Heriot!' replied Sir Mungo, choosing then to use his malady of misapprehension. 'Moonshine in water, poor thing, if that is all she is to be tochered with. I am truly solicitous about them.'

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[1] See Note 16.

'I will let you into a secret,' said the citizen, 'which will relieve your tender anxiety. The dowager Lady Dalgarno gives a competent fortune to the bride, and settles the rest of her estate upon her nephew the bridegroom.'

'Ay, say ye sae?' said Sir Mungo, 'just to show her regard to her husband that is in the tomb; lucky that her nephew did not send him there. It was a strange story that death of poor Lord Dalgarno; some folk think the poor gentleman had much wrong. Little good comes of marrying the daughter of the house you are at feud with; indeed, it was less poor Dalgarno's fault than theirs that forced the match on him. But I am glad the young folk are to have something to live on, come how it like, whether by charity or inheritance. But if the Lady Dalgarno were to sell all she has, even to her very wylie-coat, she canna gie them back the fair Castle of Glenvarloch: that is lost and gane — lost and gane.'

'It is but too true,' said George Heriot; 'we cannot discover what has become of the villain Andrew Skurliewhitter, or what Lord Dalgarno has done with the mortgage.'

'Assigned it away to some one, that his wife might not get it after he was gane; it would have disturbed him in his grave to think Glenvarloch should get that land back again,' said Sir Mungo; 'depend on it, he will have ta'en sure measures to keep that noble lordship out of her grips or her nevoy's either.'

'Indeed, it is but too probable, Sir Mungo,' said Master Heriot; 'but, as I am obliged to go and look after many things in consequence of this ceremony, I must leave you to comfort yourself with the reflection.'

'The bride-day, you say, is to be on the thirtieth of the instant month?' said Sir Mungo, hallooing after the citizen. 'I will be with you in the hour of cause.'

'The King invites the guests,' said George Heriot, without turning back.

'The base-born, ill-bred mechanic!' soliloquised Sir Mungo, 'if it were not the odd score of pounds he lent me last week, I would teach him how to bear himself to a man of quality! But I will be at the bridal banquet in spite of him.'

Sir Mungo contrived to get invited, or commanded, to attend on the bridal accordingly, at which there were but few persons present; for James, on such occasions, preferred a snug privacy, which gave him liberty to lay aside the encumbrance, as he felt it to be, of his regal dignity. The company was very small, and indeed there were at least two persons absent whose presence might have been expected. The first of these was the Lady Dalgarno, the state of whose health, as well as the recent death of her husband, precluded her attendance on the ceremony. The other absentee was Richie Moniplies, whose conduct for some time past had been extremely mysterious. Regulating his attendance on Lord Glenvarloch entirely according to his own will and pleasure, he had, ever since the rencounter in Enfield Chase, appeared regularly at his bedside in the morning, to assist him to dress, and at his wardrobe in the evening. The rest of the day he disposed of at his own pleasure, without control from his lord, who had now a complete establishment of attendants. Yet he was somewhat curious to know how the fellow disposed of so much of his time; but on this subject Richie showed no desire to be communicative.

On the morning of the bridal day, Richie was particularly attentive in doing all a *valet-de-chambre* could, so as to set off to advantage the very handsome figure of his master; and when he had arranged his dress with the utmost exactness, and put to his long curled locks what he called 'the finishing touch of the redding-kaim,' he gravely kneeled down, kissed his hand, and bade him farewell, saying, that he humbly craved leave to discharge himself of his lordship's service.

'Why, what humour is this?' said Lord Glenvarloch; 'if you mean to discharge yourself of my service, Richie, I suppose you intend to enter my wife's?'

'I wish her good ladyship that shall soon be, and your good lordship, the blessings of as good a servant as myself, in Heaven's good time,' said Richie; 'but fate hath so ordained it that I can henceforth only be your servant in the way of friendly courtesy.'

'Well, Richie,' said the young lord, 'if you are tired of service, we will seek some better provision for you; but you will wait on me to the church, and partake of the bridal dinner?'

'Under favour, my lord,' answered Richie, 'I must remind you of our covenant, having presently some pressing business of mine own, whilk will detain me during the ceremony; but I will not fail to prie Master George's good cheer, in respect he has made very costly fare, whilk it would be unthankful not to partake of.'

'Do as you list,' answered Lord Glenvarloch; and, having bestowed a passing thought on the whimsical and pragmatical dispostion of his follower, he dismissed the subject for others better suited to the day.

The reader must fancy the scattered flowers which strewed the path of the happy couple to church — the loud music which accompanied the procession — the marriage service performed by a bishop — the King, who met them at St. Paul's, giving away the bride, to the great relief of her father, who had thus time, during the ceremony, to calculate the just quotient to be laid on the pinion of report in a timepiece which he was then putting together.

When the ceremony was finished, the company were transported in the royal carriages to George Heriot's, where a splendid collation was provided for the marriage guests in the Foljambe apartments. The King no sooner found himself in this snug retreat than, casting from him his sword and belt with such haste as if they burnt his fingers, and flinging his plumed hat on the table, as who should say, 'Lie there, authority!' he swallowed a hearty cup of wine to the happiness of the married couple, and began to amble about the room, mumping, laughing, and cracking jests, neither the wittiest nor the most delicate, but accompanied and applauded by shouts of his own mirth, in order to encourage that of the company. Whilst his Majesty was in the midst of this gay humour, and a call to the banquet was anxiously expected, a servant whispered Master Heriot forth of the apartment. When he reëntered, he walked up to the King, and, in his turn, whispered something, at which James started.

'He is not wanting his siller?' said the King, shortly and sharply.

'By no means, my liege,' answered Heriot. 'It is a subject he states himself as quite indifferent about, so long as it can pleasure your Majesty.'

'Body of us, man!' said the King, 'it is the speech of a true man and a loving subject, and we will grace him accordingly, what though he be but a carle — a twopenny cat may look at a king. Swith man! have him — *pandite fores*. Moniplies! They should have called the chield Monypennies, though I sall warrant you English think we have not such a name in Scotland.'

'It is an ancient and honourable stock, the Monypennies,' said Sir Mungo Malagrowther; 'the only loss is, there are sae few of the name.'

'The family seems to increase among your countrymen, Sir Mungo,' said Master Lowestoffe, whom Lord Glenvarloch had invited to be present, 'since his Majesty's happy accession brought so many of you here.'

'Right, sir — right,' said Sir Mungo, nodding and looking at George Heriot; 'there have some of ourselves been the better of that great blessing to the English nation.'

As he spoke, the door flew open, and in entered, to the astonishment of Lord Glenvarloch, his late serving-man, Richie Moniplies, now sumptuously, nay, gorgeously, attired in a superb brocaded suit, and leading in his hand the tall, thin, withered, somewhat distorted form of Martha Trapbois, arrayed in a complete dress of black velvet, which suited so strangely with the pallid and severe melancholy of her countenance, that the King himself exclaimed, in some perturbation, 'What the deil has the fallow brought us here? Body of our regal selves! it is a corpse that has run off with the mortcloth!'

'May I sifflicate your Majesty to be gracious unto her?' said Richie; 'being that she is, in respect of this morning's wark, my ain wedded wife, Mrs. Martha Moniplies by name.'

'Saul of our body, man! but she looks wondrous grim,' answered King James. 'Art thou sure she has not been in her time maid of honour to Queen Mary, our kinswoman, of red-hot memory?'

'I am sure, an it like your Majesty, that she has brought me fifty thousand pounds of good siller, and better; and that has enabled me to pleasure your Majesty and other folk.'

'Ye need have said naething about that, man,' said the King; 'we ken our obligations in that sma' matter, and we are glad this rudas spouse of thine hath bestowed her treasure on ane wha kens to put it to the profit of his King and country. But how the deil did ye come by her, man?'

'In the auld Scottish fashion, my liege. She is the captive of my bow and my spear,' answered Moniplies. 'There was a convention that she should wed me when I avenged her father's death; so I slew and took possession.'

'It is the daughter of old Trapbois, who has been missed so long,' said Lowestoffe. 'Where the devil could you mew her up so closely, friend Richie?'

'Master Richard, if it be your will,' answered Richie; 'or Master Richard Moniplies, if you like it better. For mewing of her up, I found her a shelter, in all honour and safety, under the roof of an honest countryman of my own; and for secrecy, it was a point of prudence, when wantons like you were abroad, Master Lowestoffe.'

There was a laugh at Richie's magnanimous reply, on the part of every one but his bride, who made to him a signal of impatience, and said, with her usual brevity and sternness, 'Peace — peace — I pray you, peace. Let us do that which we came for.' So saying, she took out a bundle of parchments, and delivering them to Lord Glenvarloch, she said aloud — 'I take this royal presence, and all here, to witness, that I restore the ransomed lordship of Glenvarloch to the right owner, as free as ever it was held by any of his ancestors.'

'I witnessed the redemption of the mortgage,' said Lowestoffe; 'but I little dreamt by whom it had been redeemed.'

'No need ye should,' said Richie, 'there would have been small wisdom in crying roast-meat.'

'Peace,' said his bride, 'once more. This paper,' she continued, delivering another to Lord Glenvarloch, 'is also your property; take it, but spare me the question how it came into my custody.'

The King had bustled forward beside Lord Glenvarloch, and fixing an eager eye on the writing, exclaimed — 'Body of ourselves, it is our royal sign-manual for the money which was so long out of sight! How came you by it, Mistress Bride?'

'It is a secret,' said Martha, drily.

'A secret which my tongue shall never utter,' said Richie, resolutely, 'unless the King commands me on my allegiance.'

'I do — I do command you,' said James, trembling and stammering with the impatient curiosity of a gossip; while Sir Mungo, with more malicious anxiety to get at the bottom of the mystery, stooped his long thin form forward like a bent fishing-rod, raised his thin grey locks from his ear, and curved his hand behind it to collect every vibration of the expected intelligence. Martha, in the meantime, frowned most ominously on Richie, who went on undauntedly to inform the King, 'That his deceased father-in-law, a good careful man in the main, had a touch of worldly wisdom about him, that at times marred the uprightness of his walk: he liked to dabble among his neighbour's gear, and some of it would at times stick to his fingers in the handling.'

'For shame, man — for shame!' said Martha; 'since the infamy of the deed must be told, be it at least briefly. Yes, my lord,' she added, addressing Glenvarloch, 'the piece of gold was not the sole bait which brought the miserable old man to your chamber that dreadful night: his object, and he accomplished it, was to purloin this paper. The wretched scrivener was with him that morning, and, I doubt not, urged the doting old man to this villainy, to offer another bar to the ransom of your estate. If there was a yet more powerful agent at the bottom of the conspiracy, God forgive it to him at this moment, for he is now where the crime must be answered!'

'Amen!' said Lord Glenvarloch, and it was echoed by all present.

'For my father,' continued she, with her stern features twitched by an involuntary and convulsive movement, 'his guilt and folly cost him his life; and my belief is constant, that the wretch who counselled him that morning to purloin the paper left open the window for the entrance of the murderers.'

Everybody was silent for an instant; the King was first to speak, commanding search instantly to be made for the guilty scrivener. '*I, lictor*,' he concluded, '*colliga manus, caput obnubito, infelici suspendite arbori*.'

Lowestoffe answered with due respect, that the scrivener had absconded at the time of Lord Dalgarno's murder, and had not been heard of since.

'Let him be sought for,' said the King. 'And now let us change the discourse; these stories make one's very blood grew, and are altogether unfit for bridal festivity. Hymen, O Hymenee!' added he, snapping his fingers. 'Lord Glenvarloch, what say you to Mistress Moniplies, this bonny bride, that has brought you back your father's estate on your bridal day?'

'Let him say nothing, my liege,' said Martha; 'that will best suit his feelings and mine.'

'There is redemption-money, at the least, to be repaid,' said Lord Glenvarloch; 'in that I cannot remain debtor.'

'We will speak of it hereafter,' said Martha; '*my* debtor *you* cannot be.' And she shut her mouth as if determined to say nothing more on the subject.

Sir Mungo, however, resolved not to part with the topic, and availing himself of the freedom of the moment, said to Richie — 'A queer story that of your father-in-law, honest man; methinks your bride thanked you little for ripping it up.'

'I make it a rule, Sir Mungo,' replied Richie, 'always to speak any evil I know about my family myself, having observed, that if I do not, it is sure to be told by ither folks.'

'But, Richie,' said Sir Mungo, 'it seems to me that this bride of yours is like to be master and mair in the conjugal state.'

'If she abides by words, Sir Mungo,' answered Richie, 'I thank Heaven I can be as deaf as any one; and if she comes to dunts, I have twa hands to paik her with.'

'Weel said, Richie, again,' said the King; 'you have gotten it on baith haffits, Sir Mungo. Troth, Mistress Bride, for a fule, your gudeman has a pretty turn of wit.'

'There are fools, sire,' replied she, 'who have wit, and fools who have courage — aye, and fools who have learning and are great fools notwithstanding. I chose this man because he was my protector when I was desolate, and neither for his wit nor his wisdom. He is truly honest, and has a heart and hand that make amends for some folly. Since I was condemned to seek a protector through the world, which is to me a wilderness, I may thank God that I have come by no worse.'

'And that is sae sensibly said,' replied the King, 'that, by my saul, I'll try whether I canna make him better. Kneel down, Richie; somebody lend me a rapier — yours, Mr. Langstaff — that's a brave name for a lawyer! Ye need not flash it out that gate, Templar fashion, as if ye were about to pink a bailiff!'

He took the drawn sword, and with averted eyes, for it was a sight he loved not to look on, endeavoured to lay it on Richie's shoulder, but nearly stuck it into his eye. Richie, starting back, attempted to rise, but was held down by Lowestoffe, while Sir Mungo guiding the royal weapon, the honour-bestowing blow was given and received. '*Surge, carnifex.* Rise up, Sir Richard Moniplies of Castle Collop! And, my lords and lieges, let us all to our dinner, for the cock-a-leekie is cooling.'

THE END

NOTES AND GLOSSARY

NOTES

NOTE 1, p. 55

A SPECIES of triumphal procession in honour of female supremacy, when it rose to such a height as to attract the attention of the neighbourhood. It is described at full length in *Hudibras* (Part II, Canto II). As the procession passed on, those who attended it in an official capacity were wont to sweep the threshold of the houses in which fame affirmed the mistresses to exercise paramount authority, which was given and received as a hint that their inmates might, in their turn, be made the subject of a similar ovation. The Skimmington, which in some degree resembled the proceedings of Mumbo Jumbo in an African village, has been long discontinued in England, apparently because female rule has become either milder or less frequent than among our ancestors.

NOTE 2, p. 113

Only three copies are known to exist; one in the library at Kennaquhair, and two — one foxed and cropped, the other tall and in good condition — both in the possession of an eminent member of the Roxburghe Club. — *Note by* CAPTAIN CLUTTERBUCK.

NOTE 3, p. 160

The Scots, till within the last generation, disliked swine's flesh as an article of food as much as the Highlanders do at present. It was remarked as extraordinary rapacity, when the Border depredators condescended to make prey of the accursed race whom the fiend made his habitation. Ben Jonson, in drawing James's character, says, he loved 'no part of a swine.'

NOTE 4, p. 175

This is the Highland patronymic of the late gallant Chief of Glengarry. The allusion in the text is to an unnecessary alarm taken by some lady at the ceremonial of the coronation of George

IV, at the sight of the pistols which the chief wore as a part of his Highland dress. The circumstance produced some confusion, which was talked of at the time. All who knew Glengarry, and the Author knew him well, were aware that his principles were of devoted loyalty to the person of his sovereign.

NOTE 5, p. 176

Roger Coke, in his *Detection of the Court and State of England*, London, 1697, p. 70, observes of James I: 'The King was excessively addicted to hunting and drinking, not ordinary French and Spanish wines, but strong Greek wines, and thought he would compound his hunting with these wines; and to that purpose, he was attended by a special officer, who was, as much as he could be, always at hand to fill the King's cup in hunting when he called for it. I have heard my father say, that, hunting with the King, after the King had drank of the wine, he also drank of it; and though he was young and of a healthful disposition, it so deranged his head that it spoiled his pleasure and disordered him for three days after. Whether it was from drinking these wines, or from some other cause, the King became so lazy and so unwieldy, that he was trussed on horseback, and as he was set, so would he ride, without stirring himself in the saddle; nay, when his hat was set upon his head he would not take the trouble to alter it, but it sate as it was put on.' The trussing, for which the demi-pique saddle of the day afforded particular facility, is alluded to in the text; and the Author, among other nicknacks of antiquity, possesses a leathern flask, like those carried by sportsmen, which is labelled 'King James's Hunting-Bottle,' with what authenticity is uncertain. Coke seems to have exaggerated the King's taste for the bottle. Weldon says James was not intemperate in his drinking: 'However, in his old age, Buckingham's jovial suppers, when he had any turn to do with him, made him sometimes overtaken, which he would the next day remember, and repent with tears. It is true, he drank very often, which was rather out of a custom than any delight; and his drinks were of that kind for strength, as Frontiniack, Canary, high country wine, tent wine, and Scottish ale, that had he not had a very strong brain, he might have been daily overtaken, though he seldom drank at any one time above four spoonfuls, many times not above one or two.' — *Secret History of King James*, vol. II, p. 3. Edinburgh, 1811.

Note 6, p. 179

I cannot here omit mentioning, that a painting of the old school is in existence, having a remarkable resemblance to the scene described in chapter XXVII, although it be nevertheless true that the similarity is in all respects casual, and that the Author knew not of the existence of the painting till it was sold, amongst others, with the following description attached to it in a well-drawn-up catalogue: —

'Frederigo Zucchero

'Scene as represented in the *Fortunes of Nigel*, by Frederigo Zucchero, the King's painter.

'This extraordinary picture, which, independent of its pictorial merit, has been esteemed a great literary curiosity, represents most faithfully the meeting in Greenwich Park, between King James and Nigel Oliphaunt, as described in the *Fortunes of Nigel*, showing that the Author must have taken the anecdote from authenticated facts. In the centre of the picture sits King James on horseback, very erect and stiffly. Beside the King and Prince Charles, who is on the left of the picture, the Duke of Buckingham is represented riding a black horse, and pointing eagerly towards the culprit, Nigel Oliphaunt, who is standing on the right side of the picture. He grasps with his right hand a gun, or crossbow, and looks angrily towards the King, who seems somewhat confused and alarmed. Behind Nigel, his servant is restraining two dogs which are barking fiercely. Nigel and his servant are both clothed in red, the livery of the Oliphaunt family, in which, to this day, the town officers of Perth are clothed, there being an old charter granting to the Oliphaunt family the privilege of dressing the public officers of Perth in their livery. The Duke of Buckingham is in all respects equal in magnificence of dress to the King or the Prince. The only difference that is marked between him and royalty is, that his head is uncovered. The King and the Prince wear their hats. In Letitia Aikin's *Memoirs of the Reign of King James* will be found a letter from Sir Thomas Howard to Lord L. Harrington, in which he recommends the latter to come to court, mentioning that his Majesty has spoken favourably of him. He then proceeds to give him some advice, by which he is likely to find favour in the King's eyes. He tells him to wear a bushy ruff, well starched; and after various other directions as to his dress, he concludes, "but, above all things, fail not to praise the roan jennet whereon the King doth daily ride." In this picture King James is represented on the identical roan jennet. In the background of the picture are seen two or three suspicious-looking figures, as if watching the success of some plot. These may have been put in by the painter to flatter the King, by making it be supposed that he had actually escaped, or successfully combated, some serious plot. The King is attended by a numerous band of courtiers and attendants, all of whom seem moving forward to arrest the defaulter. The painting of this picture is extremely good, but the drawing is very Gothic, and there is no attempt at the keeping of perspective. The picture is very dark and obscure, which considerably adds to the interest of the scene.'

Note 7, p. 180

The fears of James for his personal safety were often excited without serious grounds. On one occasion, having been induced to visit a coal-pit on the coast of Fife, he was conducted a little way under the sea, and brought to daylight again on a small island, or what was such at full tide, down which a shaft had been sunk. James, who conceived his life or liberty aimed at, when he found himself on an islet surrounded by the sea, instead of admiring, as his cicerone hoped, the unexpected change of scene, cried 'Treason' with all his might, and could not be pacified till he was rowed ashore. At Lochmaben he took an equally causeless alarm from a still slighter circumstance. Some *vendisses*, a fish peculiar to the loch, were presented to the royal table as a delicacy; but the King, who was not familiar with their appearance, concluded they were poisoned, and broke up the banquet 'with most admired disorder.'

Note 8, p. 183

Traitor's Gate, which opens from the Tower of London to the Thames, was, as its name implies, that by which persons accused of state offences were conveyed to their prison. When the tide is making, and the ancient gate is beheld from within the buildings, it used to be a most striking part of the old fortress; but it is now much injured in appearance, being half built up with masonry to support a steam-engine, or something of that sort.

Note 9, p. 186

These memorials of illustrious criminals, or of innocent persons who had the fate of such, are still preserved, though at one time, in the course of repairing the rooms, they were in some danger of being whitewashed. They are preserved at present with becoming respect, and have most of them been engraved. See Bayley's *History and Antiquities of the Tower of London.*

NOTE 10, p. 229

Wilson informs us that when Colonel Grey, a Scotsman who affected the buff dress even in the time of peace, appeared in that military garb at court, the King, seeing him with a case of pistols at his girdle, which he never greatly liked, told him, merrily, 'He was now so fortified that, if he were but well victualled, he would be impregnable' (Wilson's *Life and Reign of James VI, apud* Kennet's *History of England*, vol. II, p. 389). In 1612, the tenth year of James's reign, there was a rumour abroad that a shipload of pocket-pistols had been exported from Spain, with a view to a general massacre of the Protestants. Proclamations were of consequence sent forth, prohibiting all persons from carrying pistols under a foot long in the barrel (*Ibid.*, p. 690).

NOTE 11, p. 231

This execution, which so captivated the imagination of Sir Mungo Malagrowther, was really a striking one. The criminal, a furious and bigoted Puritan, had published a book in very violent terms against the match of Elizabeth with the Duke of Alençon, which he termed an union of a daughter of God with a son of Anti-Christ. Queen Elizabeth was greatly incensed at the freedom assumed in this work, and caused the author Stubbs, with Page the publisher, and one Singleton the printer, to be tried on an act passed by Philip and Mary against the writers and dispersers of seditious publications. They were convicted, and although there was an opinion strongly entertained by lawyers, that the act was only temporary, and expired with Queen Mary, Stubbs and Page received sentence to have their right hands struck off. They accordingly suffered the punishment, the wrist being divided by a cleaver driven through the joint by force of a mallet. The printer was pardoned. 'I remember,' says the historian Camden, 'being then present, that Stubbs, when his right hand was cut off, plucked off his hat with the left, and said, with a loud voice, "God save the Queen!" The multitude standing about was deeply silent, either out of horror of this new and unwonted kind of punishment, or out of commiseration towards the man, as being of an honest and unblamable repute, or else out of hatred to the marriage, which most men presaged would be the overthrow of religion.' — Camden's *Annals for the Year 1581.*

NOTE 12, p. 253

The practical jest of Richie Moniplies going behind the arras to get an opportunity of teasing Heriot was a pleasantry such as James might be supposed to approve of. It was customary for those who knew his humour to contrive jests of this kind for his amusement. The celebrated Archie Armstrong, and another jester called Drummond, mounted on other people's backs, used to charge each other like knights in the tilt-yard, to the monarch's great amusement. The following is an instance of the same kind, taken from Webster upon witchcraft. The author is speaking of the faculty called ventriloquism: —

'But to make this more plain and certain, we shall add a story of a notable impostor, or ventriloquist, from the testimony of Mr. Ady, which we have had confirmed from the mouth of some courtiers, that both saw and knew him, and is this: — It hath been, saith he, credibly reported, that there was a man in the court in King James his days that could act this imposture so lively, that he could call the King by name, and cause the King to look round about him, wondering who it was that called him, whereas, he that called him stood before him in his presence with his face towards him. But after this imposture was known, the King, in his merriment, would sometimes take occasionally this impostor to make sport upon some of his courtiers, as, for instance: —

'There was a knight belonging to the court, whom the King caused to come before him in his private room, where no man was but the King and this knight and the impostor, and feigned some occasion of serious discourse with the knight; but when the King began to speak, and the knight bending his attention to the King, suddenly there came a voice as out of another room, calling the knight by name, "Sir John—Sir John; come away, Sir John"; at which the knight began to frown that any man should be so unmannerly as to molest the King and him; and still listening to the King's discourse, the voice came again, "Sir John — Sir John, come away and drink off your sack." At that Sir John began to swell with anger, and looked into the next rooms to see who it was that dared to call him so importunately, and could not find out who it was, and having chid with whomsoever he found, he returned again to the King. The King had no sooner begun to speak as formerly, but the voice came again, "Sir John, come away, your sack stayeth for you." At that Sir John began to stamp with madness, and looked out and returned several times to the King, but could not be quiet in his discourse with the King, because of the voice that so often troubled him, till the King had sported enough.' — WEBSTER *on Witchcraft*, p. 124.

NOTE 13, p. 267

A leglin-girth is the lowest hoop upon a leglin, or milk-pail. Allan Ramsay applies the phrase in the same metaphorical sense.

> Or bairns can read, they first maun spell,
> I learn'd this frae my mammy,
> And cast a leglin-girth mysell
> Lang ere I married Tammy.
>
> *Christ's Kirk on the Green.*

NOTE 14, p. 280

Whether out of a meddling propensity common to all who have a gossiping disposition, or from the love of justice, which ought to make part of a prince's character, James was very fond of inquiring personally into the *causes célèbres* which occurred during his reign. In the imposture of the Boy of Bilson, who pretended to be possessed, and of one Richard Haydock, a poor scholar, who pretended to preach during his sleep, the King, to use the historian Wilson's expression, took delight in sounding with the line of his understanding the depth of these brutish impositions, and, in doing so, showed the acuteness with which he was endowed by nature. Lady Lake's story consisted in a clamorous complaint against the Countess of Exeter, whom she accused of a purpose to put to death Lady Lake herself, and her daughter, Lady Ross, the wife of the countess's own son-in-law, Lord Ross; and a forged letter was produced, in which Lady Exeter was made to acknowledge such a purpose. The account given of the occasion of obtaining this letter was, that it had been written by the countess at Wimbledon, in presence of Lady Lake and her daughter, Lady Ross, being designed to procure their forgiveness for her mischievous intention. The King remained still unsatisfied, the writing, in his opinion, bearing strong marks of forgery. Lady Lake and her daughter then alleged that, besides their own attestation and that of a confidential domestic, named Diego, in whose presence Lady Exeter had written the confession, their story might also be supported by the oath of their waiting-maid, who had been placed behind the hangings at the time the letter was written, and heard the Countess of Exeter read over the confession after she had signed it. Determined to be at the bottom of this accusation, James, while hunting one day near Wimbledon, the scene of the alleged confession, suddenly left his sport, and, galloping hastily to Wimbledon, in order to examine personally the room, discovered, from the size of the apartment, that the alleged conversation could not have taken place in the manner sworn to; and that the tapestry of the chamber, which had remained in the same state for thirty years, was too short by two feet, and, therefore, could not have concealed any one behind it. This matter was accounted an exclusive discovery of the King by his own spirit of shrewd investigation. The parties were punished in the Star Chamber by fine and imprisonment.

NOTE 15, p. 307

Clarendon remarks, that the importance of the military exercise of the citizens was severely felt by the Cavaliers during the Civil War, notwithstanding the ridicule that had been showered upon it by the dramatic poets of the day. Nothing less than habitual practice could, at the battle of Newbury and elsewhere, have enabled the Londoners to keep their ranks as pikemen, in spite of the repeated charge of the fiery Prince Rupert and his gallant Cavaliers.

NOTE 16, p. 333

The penny-wedding of the Scots, now disused even among the lowest ranks, was a peculiar species of merry-making, at which, if the wedded pair were popular, the guests who convened contributed considerable sums under pretence of paying for the bridal festivity, but in reality to set the married folk afloat in the world.

GLOSSARY

a', all.
accompt, account.
ae, a, one.
aff, off.
ahint, after, behind.
ain, own.
alack-a-day, alas!
Alsatia, Whitefriars, London.
amaist, **almaist**, almost.
amang, among.
an, if.
ance, once.
Andrew or Andrea Ferrara, a broadsword of fine steel, named after the maker.
ane, **ane's**, one, one's.
anent, opposite to, concerning.
arras, tapestry.
atrabilarious, acrimonious.
aught, eight, or, to owe.
auld, old.
auld-warld, ancient.
avised, advised, informed.
avisement, advice.
awa, away.
aweel, well.
awes, owes.
awmous, alms.

back-sword, a sword with only one sharp edge.
bairn, a child.
bairnly, childish.
baith, both.
bale of dice, a pair or set of dice.
bang it out, fight it out.
barns-breaking, a mischievous escapade.
bastard, a kind of sweet wine.
bawbee, a half-penny.
bearna, do not bear.
bears, are you there with your? Are you there again? are you at it again?
behoved, was obliged.
bein, well-to-do.
beldam, an old woman, a hag.
bencher, one of the senior members of the Inns of Court.
beshrew, curse.
bide, remain, wait.
bide back, keep back; **bide down**, keep down.
bieldy, sheltered.
bilbo, a sword.
bing off, go away.
birkie, a young fellow.
black-foot, a match maker.
black-jack, a leather jug.
blate, bashful.
blinks, twinkles.
blithe, **blythe**, glad; **blythely**, gladly, pleasantly.
boddle, a small copper coin.
bode, what is bidden, an offer.
bonnie penny, a considerable sum.
bonny, pretty.
bounden, bound.
bow-hand, left hand, on the wrong side.
brae, a hill-side.
braid, broad.
bravery, fine dress.
breeks, breeches.
broche, a spit.
broke, broken.
broom-shank, the handle of a broom.
bucket, cheat.
buckles, marries.
buss, kiss.

ca', call, move.
cabal, a clique, a faction.
cadger, a packman, a huckster.
canna, cannot.
canny, cautious, prudent, useful.
carle, a fellow.

carle-hemp, the hemp that bears the seed, robustness.
carnificial, of or belonging to flesh.
caup, a cup, a wooden bowl; also, exaction, tithe.
causey, the causeway or street.
change-house, an inn.
chappit, struck.
cheek-for-chowl, very intimate.
chiel', chield, a fellow, a young man.
chopins, chopines, high pattens formerly worn by ladies.
chouse, cheat.
cimelia, treasures.
clary, a sweet mixture of wine, clarified honey, and various spices.
claymore, a two-edged broadsword.
clean caup out, drinking deeply.
cleek, a hook.
clerk to St. Nicholas, a highwayman.
clout, cloth; to beat, to strike.
cock-a-leekie, leek soup in which a cock has been boiled.
cocksbones, cocksnails, cock and pie, — oaths of the period.
collop, collops, sliced meat, minced meat.
comesna, does not come.
contriturating, pulverising.
contunding, pounding, bruising.
cony-catcher, a sharper.
coshering, familiar, hospitable.
couchee, an assembly of company in the evening.
coup the crans, to have an upset, to come to grief.
coupit, knocked; **coupit ower,** overset.
couverts, covers.
craig, the neck; also, a rock.
cully, one meanly deceived.
curn, a grain.
cusser, a stallion.
cutter, a thief.
cutter's law, to protect each other.
cutty quean, a worthless woman.

daft, crazy.
dang, knocked.
decus, a crown piece.
deevil, deil, the devil.
demi-pique, a war saddle having a peak only half the height of the ancient kind.
dexter, the right hand.
dike-louper, a person given to immoral conduct.
ding, drive, beat, strike.
dinna, do not.
dirk, a dagger; also, to stab.
doctors, false dice.
dooms, very, absolutely.
doublet, a vest.
douce, quiet, respectable.
doun, down.
dreamna, dream not.
drouthy, dry, thirsty.
drumble, drone, delay.
duke of Exeter's daughter, a particular species of rack used at the Tower of London.
dune, done.
dunt, knock.

ee, the eye; **een,** the eyes.
e'en, even, just.
elritch, weird.
endlang, lengthwise.
eneugh, enough.
ethnic, heathen.
evite, shun, avoid.
exies, hysterics.

fadge, to suit, to succeed.
falchion, a short crooked sword.
fallow, a fellow.
falset, false, falsehood.
fash, trouble.
fash your beard, trouble yourself.
fause, false.
fay, fey, condemned, fated to die.
fence-louper, fence leaper (applied to sheep).
flatcaps, London citizens (or apprentices).
flesher, a butcher.
forbye, besides.
forfeit, offence, trespass.
forgie, forgive.
foul-fiend, the devil.
foumart, foulmart, a polecat.
frae, from.
friar's chicken, chicken broth boiled with eggs.

frippery, old clothes.
frontless, shameless.
fule, a fool.

gaffer, an old man, an overseer, a talkative person.
gait, way, manner.
gane, gone.
gang, go.
gar, make, cause, compel.
garniture, ornamental appendages.
gate, way, manner.
gawdy, gaudy, a festivity.
gay and weel, pretty well.
gear, goods, money; **goodly gear,** fine business.
gentry, the quality or rank of gentleman.
ghittern, a guitar.
gie, give.
gien, given.
giff-gaff, nothing for nothing, tit for tat.
gill, a female.
gillie-white-foot, a running footman.
gilravager, a wanton fellow.
gin, if.
glaiks, glamour, tricks; **gie the glaiks,** deceive, jilt.
gleed, squinting, awry.
gleek, a game at cards.
God-den, good-den, good evening.
gouk, a fool.
gowd, gold.
gramercy, many thanks, much obliged.
grazier, one who grazes or feeds cattle for market.
gree, agree.
greet, weep.
grew, thrill, shudder.
grey gate, a dismal way.
grip, grasp, hold fast.
griskin, the lean part of the loin of a pig.
groat, a coin worth about fourpence.
grosart, grossart, a gooseberry.
Gude, God, good.
gudeman, husband.
gudes, goods, wares.
gudesire, grandfather.
guide, manage.
gusty, savoury.

hae, have.
haffits, the cheeks.
hair in his neck, to have a, to know something that will put him in one's power.
halberd, a military weapon combining spear and battle axe.
hale, whole.
hame, home.
hame-sucken, assaulting a person in his own house.
hanger, a short broadsword.
harle, to drag; also, to appropriate.
harman-beck, a constable.
hart of grease, a hart in the best condition.
hatch-door, a half door, a small gate or wicket.
hatched, engraved, inlaid.
haud, hold.
hays, a dance.
heautontimorumenos, the self tormentor.
het, hot.
hings, hangs.
hirsel, a flock.
hits, strokes, plays.
horn-mad, stark mad, outrageous.
horologe, a timepiece.
howff, a haunt.
huff, a boaster, a bully.

ilka, each, every.
indirection, dishonest means.
ingine, genius, ingenuity.
inkle, a kind of linen tape, the thread or yarn from which inkle is made.
ither, other.

jacobus, a gold coin worth 25*s.*
Jeddart, Jedburgh.
jennet, a small Spanish horse.
jerkin, a jacket.
jipper, to peril, to jeopardize.

kemp, strive for victory.
kemping, striving, fighting.
ken, know.
ken'd, known, well known.
kenna, know not.

kickshaw, a light made up dish, a trifle; also, a coxcomb.
kirk, a church.
kist, a chest.
kittle, tickle, ticklish.
knave, a boy, a servant.

lang, long.
lang syne, long ago.
lap, leapt.
lavender, in pawn; also, in hiding, in confinement.
lavrock, the lark.
leaguer, encamped.
leaguer-lass, a camp or soldier's lass.
leasing, lying.
leddy, a lady.
leglin, a milk-pail.
leman, a gallant, a mistress.
letna, do not let.
lift, the sky.
light o' love, a wanton young woman, a mistress.
like, please.
limns, draws.
list, please.
loof, the palm of the hand.
loon, a lad, a clown, a rascal.
loun, lound, calm, low.
loup, leap.
lug, lugg, the ear.
lustre, a period of five years.

Mahound, Mahomet.
mail, clothes, luggage; **mail-trunk,** a clothes trunk.
mair, more.
mair tint on Flodden Edge, more lost on Flodden field.
maist, most.
'maist, almost.
mak, make.
malison, a curse.
maun, must.
maunna, must not.
mew, to confine; also, to moult.
miching, mean, cowardly.
mickle, large, much.
minion, a favourite.
mint, hint, aim at.
mirk, dark.
montero, a huntsman's cap.
mony, many.
muckle, large, much.
mulligrubs, low spirits.
mummer, one who makes sport in disguise.
mumping, grimacing, mumbling, sulking.
musketoon, a short musket with a large bore.

na, nae, no, not.
naething, nothing.
naig, a nag.
nane, none.
neednа, need not.
nevoy, a nephew.
nicher, neigh, giggle.
nick, defeat, deceive.
niffer, exchange.
nipperkin, a small cup.
noble, a gold coin worth 6*s*. 8*d*.
nooning, a repast at noon.

oaken towel, an oak cudgel.
ony, any.
opignorate, to pledge.
or, before.

paik, punish.
paring shovel, an instrument for paring floors; also, one for clearing stubble from land after harvest.
pasquinado, a lampoon.
peery, curious, suspicious.
Peg-a-Ramsay, the name of an old song.
penny-wedding, a wedding at which each guest contributes money to the expense of the entertainment.
petronel, a horse pistol.
pickthank, an officious fellow.
pineal gland, the part of the brain supposed by Descartes to be the seat of the soul.
pith, spirit, energy.
plack, a copper coin worth $\frac{1}{3}$ of a penny; **plack and bawbee,** everything.
ploy, entertainment, harmless frolic.
pock, poke, a bag.
poortith, poverty.
pottle, a pot or tankard.
pouther, gunpowder.

prestable, payable.
prie, taste.
primero, a game at cards.
princox, a coxcomb.
puir, poor.
pursuivant-at-arms, a warrant officer.
put, a blockhead; also, a game at cards.
putten, put.

quean, a young woman, a wench.
quick, living, alive.
quotha! forsooth!

rabbit, drat (an imprecation).
rabble, to drive away by a mob.
rampallian, a mean wretch.
ram-skin, parchment.
rave, rent, tore.
redding-kaim, an unravelling comb.
redd up, put in order.
red-shank, a bare-legged person, a Highlander.
red-wud, stark mad.
reek, smoke.
rook, defraud, clear out.
row, roll; **bowls row wrang,** the bowls roll wrong, things go amiss.
rudas, a bold, masculine woman.
ruffle it, swagger.
rummer glasses, large drinking glasses.
rustles it, is finely dressed in material that rustles.

sae, so.
sair, sore.
sall, shall.
sang, a song.
saul, the soul.
scantling, a small amount, a smattering.
scrivener, one whose occupation is the drawing of contracts, etc.
shot of, free of.
shouther, a shoulder.
shule, a shovel.
sic, such.
sifflication, a supplication, a petition.
siller, money.
skeen, skene, a knife.
skelder, swindle.
slashes, openings made in a dress to show its rich lining.
sleeveless, fruitless.
slough, skin, clothing.
smaik, a rascal.
smelts, gold coins.
snap-haunce, a hand-gun or a pistol fired by flint and steel.
sniggle, to giggle; also, to capture a slippery person.
soothfast, honest, faithful.
spang, spring, leap.
speer, inquire.
speerings, inquiries.
spot, piece; **bonny spot of work, proper spot of work,** a fine piece of work.
spraickle, clamber.
spunk out, brought to light, got abroad.
stretcher, a narrow piece of plank for rowers to set their feet against.
subscrive, subscribe.
suld, should.
sumpter-horse, a pack-horse.
swashbuckler, a sword-player, a bully.
swith, instantly.
syne, since, ago.

tabinet, a fabric of silk and wool.
taffeta, a fine silk stuff.
tait of woo', a small portion of wool.
tale, count, number.
teinds, tithes.
tester, the canopy of a bed; also, an old silver coin worth 6*d.*
thae, these, those.
thegither, together.
tike, a dog.
till, to.
tires, attires, dresses.
tocher, a dowry.
toom, empty.
tout, a blast, a fit of ill-humour or ill-health.
trankums, trinkets, gimcracks.
trencher, a wooden plate for serving meat.
trencherman, a hearty feeder.
trepan, trap, ensnare.
trow, believe.

trowl, throw, roll, drive about.
trunnion, a truncheon, a staff.
turn-broche, a turnspit.
twa, two.
twiring, glancing slyly.
tyke, a dog, a cur.

umquhile, the late.
uphaud, uphold.

vera, very.
veshel, vessail, a vessel.
viretot, tramp.
vivers, victuals.

wad, would; also, pledge, pawn.
wadna, would not.
wadset, a mortgage.
wain, a waggon.
wanion, vengeance.
wap and win, go in and win.
warlock, a wizard.
wee, little, small.
weel, well; **weel dune,** well done.
wha, who.
whare, where.
whase, whose.
what for, why.
whetter, an appetizer.
whiles, sometimes.
whilk, which.
whimsy, a whim.
whinger, a short sword, used as a knife at meals, as a sword in broils.
whinyard, a short crooked sword.
whippet, whipped.
whomle, turn over.
whunstane, whinstone.
wi', with.
winna, will not.
withy, widdie, a halter, the gallows.
witness, with a, effectually, excessively.
wittol, a cuckold.
wot, know.
wotna, know not.
wrang, wrong.
wud, mad; **red-wud,** stark mad.
wylie-coat, an under-vest.
wyte, blame.

yellow-hammers, gold coins.
yestreen, yester even, last night.
yon, that, the other.

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